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**THE ENGLISH RIVER CONGREGATION OF
THE CHURCH OF THE BRETHREN**

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IOWA CITY IOWA

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Edited by BENJ. F. SHAMBAUGH

**The English River Congregation of
the Church of the Brethren**

**By
ELLIS L. KIRKPATRICK**

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EDITOR'S INTRODUCTION

This monograph was compiled in 1920 as a case history study of a local unit of the Church of the Brethren near South English, Iowa. A check of the work (made in 1929 and 1930) appears as a separate part of the monograph, although material secured in the later survey is made use of throughout the study.

The author of the monograph, Mr. Ellis L. Kirkpatrick, was a graduate student at the University of Kansas at the time the study was made. He is now Associate Professor in the Department of Rural Sociology at the University of Wisconsin.

This is the second number in the *Iowa Monograph Series*. The first, *The Legislation of the Forty-third General Assembly of Iowa*, by Jacob A. Swisher, appeared in 1929.

BENJ. F. SHAMBAUGH

OFFICE OF THE SUPERINTENDENT AND EDITOR
THE STATE HISTORICAL SOCIETY OF IOWA
IOWA CITY IOWA

PREFACE

In these days of "decline of the rural church" we have yet to find a thorough-going unbiased study of at least one active local rural congregation. The following treatise represents an attempt at this type of study. It pertains to an open country congregation of the Church of the Brethren which has "held its own" for more than three-quarters of a century.

The study grew out of a desire to acquaint myself thoroughly with the social background of the church of my childhood and youth. The social and religious customs and traditions of this church were not accepted by me as they were by my sister. They were not rejected on the grounds of any lack of spiritual appeal, however; rather, they were put aside more or less unconsciously in my amalgamation or interaction with society in general.

My first introduction to the science of sociology sharpened my desire to trace the origin of the creeds, customs, and traditions of the church referred to above and to study their influence on a group which accepts them, in its relation to other groups and to society as a whole. Do they tend to retard or to promote the development of the group of which they are characteristic? What reactions do they draw from neighboring social groups? Can these customs and traditions be held satisfactorily against a society immediately surrounding and intermingling with the group which possesses them?

The first part of the study was made in the spring of 1920 to fulfill the thesis requirement for a master's degree in sociology at the University of Kansas. This was revised,

that is, reorganized and rewritten without any change of content, during the fall of 1929. The latter part of the study was conducted in the spring of 1929 and the winter of 1930, for the purpose of checking the conclusions or findings and the proposals which grew out of the former study.

I wish to make acknowledgments to many for inspiration and assistance in connection with the study. Among them are F. W. Blackmar and W. R. Smith of the University of Kansas, and W. D. Grove, A. H. Brower, J. D. Brower, W. H. Brower, and other leaders of the local congregation, in particular. In addition I owe acknowledgments to all the persons who by responding so freely to questions asked in the survey made possible the major part of the study. Lastly, I extend appreciation to all who responded to my letters requesting information on present trends in the local congregation.

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UNIVERSITY OF WISCONSIN
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THE ENGLISH RIVER CONGREGATION OF THE CHURCH OF THE BRETHREN

THE church here considered comprises a typical rural congregation of the Church of the Brethren. It is the English River congregation and is located two and one-half miles east of the village of South English, Iowa. The original study was made in 1920 and the facts as stated usually refer to the situation as it existed at that time. (For changes which occurred between 1920 and 1929, see below pp. 93-101). The locality or neighborhood of the congregation covers an area equal to that of a civil township—thirty-six square miles. Approximately two-thirds of the land within the area is owned and operated by families of the Brethren faith.

The boundary lines of the locality do not, however, coincide with those of the civil township. They are irregular and indefinite; more so now than in the past. Doubtless they will become even less regular and less definite in the future. Apparently the area of the locality or neighborhood has expanded during the past quarter of a century. This expansion may have weakened the solidarity of the local group, for appearances suggest a noticeable blending of the activities, traditions, and customs of the congregation with those of the population which surrounds it.

The sect or denomination known as the Church of the Brethren is an organization of 120,000 members, chiefly in rural congregations of the United States. Prior to 1908, the parent body, as well as the local congregations and the individual members composing them, were known commonly as Tunker, Dunker, or Dunkard, and semi-officially as

German Baptist Brethren. The national annual meeting or conference, held at Des Moines, Iowa, in 1908, referred "the matter of name to a committee for one year and after ample discussion and much unanimity and good feeling, the church name was changed from German Baptist Brethren to Church of the Brethren."¹ In spite of this official change of name, however, local congregations of the organization are still generally designated as Dunker or Dunkard. The English River congregation and the members which compose it are referred to more often by outsiders as Dunkard than as Brethren.

The official change of name implied no change of creed, custom, or tradition. The devout Brethren of today, like the devout Friends and Mennonites, are conspicuous members of society. As described by Morgan Edwards, in 1770, "They use great plainness of dress, like the Quakers. They commonly wear their beards, the mustache alone being forbidden."² The men, particularly the ministers and deacons, wear coats with standing collars and avoid the use of neckties. The women wear bonnets, and occasionally hoods, with prayer caps or coverings when in attendance at church services.

The church building which serves as the home of the English River congregation stands midway between the towns of South English and Kinross, Iowa. It is a frame structure, forty feet by sixty feet in size, plain in appearance and unadorned with trees or shrubbery. The building faces the highway which lies to the north. It is surrounded on one side and at the back by a large service yard, equipped with a long shelter shed for teams and automobiles. At the rear of the service yard is the English River cemetery.

¹ *Minutes of Annual Meeting of the Church of the Brethren*, 1908.

² Edwards's *Materials Towards a History of the Baptists in America*, Vol. I, Pt. 4, p. 66.

This was established in 1856 and enlarged in 1903 to its present size of approximately two and one-half acres.

The neighboring church groups of the English River congregation are a Mennonite congregation, two miles south; the Methodist, Baptist, and Christian churches of South English; and the Methodist, Christian, and Catholic churches of Kinross. Each of these groups has a house of worship. Only two of them—the Mennonite and the Catholic churches—are supplied with resident pastors. The two Methodist groups constitute a half of one Methodist circuit which is presided over by one minister. The other two groups open their houses of worship for Sunday school regularly and for preaching services whenever supply pastors can be secured.

Educational facilities of the neighborhood and the larger community are limited to the rural schools and the schools of South English and Kinross. Among the country schools which are concerned wholly or in part with the education of the children of Brethren families are Liberty, Locust Grove, Union, Prairie, and Washington. The Locust Grove school, which is located one and one-half miles south of the church, has practically all Brethren patronage. Liberty school, approximately half a mile northwest of the church, has the next heaviest Brethren patronage. Union, about three miles north of Liberty, Prairie, two miles east of Locust Grove, and Washington, two miles west of Locust Grove, have now, as in the past, relatively few pupils enrolled from Brethren families. Likewise, the schools at South English and Kinross, the former with eleven grades and the latter with ten grades of school work have had relatively few pupils from Brethren families on their rolls.

The locality has fair trade and market facilities and services. South English, the larger of the two towns, reports 330 inhabitants. Its trade and service facilities in-

clude a railroad station, a post office, two general stores, a grocery store, a meat market, two drug stores, two restaurants, a hardware store, a garage and filling station, two banks, a farmers' grain and lumber company, a doctor, and a monument dealer. The village of Kinross has fewer inhabitants as well as fewer trade and service facilities. Its facilities include a railroad station, a post office, a general store, a hardware store, a bank, a restaurant, and a farmers' grain and lumber company.

The market outlet for farm crops and live stock is fair. Produce is usually shipped from South English or Kinross to Chicago over a branch of the Chicago, Rock Island and Pacific Railroad which connects through Muscatine with the main line at Davenport. Satisfactory markets are not available for dairy or poultry products, fruits, or truck crops, any of which could be produced more widely than at present.

The roads of the locality are in poor shape. None of them are hard surfaced or graveled and few if any of them are well enough graded to insure their being passable by automobiles during late winter and spring. Most of the roads are level, except in the northern portion of the locality where there are hills. The rights of way are wide and are seldom kept free from weeds and thickets along the sides.

Farm land of the locality is well adapted to general farming. The topography ranges from level to rolling and in a few cases hilly. The soil is a rich, black prairie loam, for the most part, and is well suited to corn, small grains, hay, and pasture.

The following treatise of the religious and social life and activities of the Church of the Brethren as depicted in the English River congregation was undertaken with the two-fold purpose of studying: (1) the degree of loyalty of the local group to the parent organization; and (2) the relation

of the local group and of the individuals composing it to other groups and individuals of the surrounding community and to society.

ORIGIN OF THE CHURCH OF THE BRETHREN

The origin of the Church of the Brethren, of which the congregation near South English, Iowa, is a part, may be traced to the German Pietist movement which grew out of the Reformation. This movement arose after the adoption of the Treaty of Westphalia in 1648, which ended the Thirty Years' War.

The Pietist Movement.—Persons in Germany who had for their aim the revival of what they considered the “declining piety of the Protestant churches” were known as Pietists. According to Otho Winger, they “deplored doctrinal differences and had more or less contempt for outward ecclesiastical arrangements.”³ They were earnest students of the Bible and accepted the Scriptures as the true essence of spiritual life and practical Christian living.

The Pietists were people from the lower class, that is, from the masses of society. They were the reactionaries against orthodoxy and scholastic learning.⁴ History authenticates the belief that they were not seeking the formation of a separate church, but rather what they regarded as a purification of the lives of professing Christians. As dissenters from the state church, undoubtedly they were called upon to bear persecution.

The Pietist movement is credited by the Church of the Brethren with three direct beneficial results : the founding of the University of Halle in 1694; the reorganization of

³ Winger's *History and Doctrines of the Church of the Brethren* (1919), p. 16.

⁴ Gillin's *The Dunkers a Sociological Interpretation* (1906), p. 20.

modern missions, about 1700; and the organization of the Church of the Brethren at Schwarzenau in 1708.⁵

Alexander Mack and His Followers.—Alexander Mack was the leading character in the founding of the Church of the Brethren, although it is doubtful whether Mack belonged to the Pietists. According to the best authorities, however, he was greatly influenced by their teachings. He held much in common with Arnold, who wrote *A Genuine Portraiture of Primitive Christians*, with Felbinger, who prepared a *Christian Handbook*, and especially with Hochmann, who wrote a confession of faith while in prison in 1702.⁶ Mack is regarded as having been a careful student of the Bible and of various theological works. He is credited with having known “the history of the church from the apostolic age to his own time. Convinced that it was impossible to live in the organized churches and equally impossible to remain a Separatist, he resolved to organize a new church, based upon primitive Christianity.”⁷

Mack called together eight associates, an earnest little body of seekers after truth.⁸ Five of these were men and three were women. They mutually agreed to throw off all allegiance to all former creeds, catechisms, and confessions of faith, to search for the truth in God’s book, and to go wherever that truth might lead them. Adopting the New Testament as their guide and declaring for a literal ob-

⁵ *Two Centuries of the Church of the Brethren* (Brethren Publishing House, 1908), p. 29.

⁶ Hochmann is held by Winger to have been a Puritan rather than a Separatist, since he could not see that it was best to organize a separate church.

⁷ Brumbaugh’s *A History of the Brethren* (1899), p. 72.

⁸ Winger’s *History and Doctrines of the Church of the Brethren* (1919), p. 18. The group included Alexander Mack, Anna Margaretha Mack, George Grebi, Lucas Vetter, Andrew Bony, Joanna Noethinger Bony, John Kipping, and Joanna Kipping.

servance of the commandments of Christ, the group gathered on the banks of the Eder River, near Schwarzenau, to administer the ordinance of baptism. There, after scripture reading, song service, and prayer, one of them baptized Mack, and Mack the seven others. Myers regards this baptismal ceremony as probably the first instance of trine or threefold immersion in all the country of the Palatinate.⁹ The method employed, in which the subject was immersed three times, in the name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost respectively, according to Matthew 28 : 19 (Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost), was adopted as the mode of baptism of the church. Following these baptismal services the group formed itself into a new church organization, with Alexander Mack as its minister and director.

It appears from various accounts that this organization prospered temporarily. Protected from persecution by a kind prince, Count Henry of Wittgenstein, and led by Mack, a zealous minister, the congregation, ever obedient to truth, was given great power to witness to others. Missionaries went forth and new congregations were organized at Marienborn, Crefeld, and Epstein. The unity of purpose of the small band became a means of attracting additional followers. Discussion of various doctrines had drawn them from the mass of people with Pietist tendencies and revealed to them their potential similarity. Only those convinced of Mack's position had entered the original band. The consciousness of unity among themselves and of differences from members of other religious or social groups made for zealous religious activity.¹⁰

⁹ *Two Centuries of the Church of the Brethren* (Brethren Publishing House, 1908), p. 31.

¹⁰ Gillin's *The Dunkers a Sociological Interpretation* (1906), p. 63.

Growth was phenomenal for a short time only. Difficulties were soon encountered, first in the congregations at Marienborn, Epstein, and Crefeld. To escape persecution in these places, members of the sect journeyed to the protected congregation at Schwarzenau. Soon the pressure from other provinces forced the Count of Wittgenstein to withdraw his protection. Only eleven years after the founding of the congregation at Schwarzenau soldiers of the state appeared there, took the babes and sprinkled them at the state church. A year later Mack led his group to Westervain, West Friesland, in north Holland. Here they remained for nine years and later most of them emigrated to William Penn's colony in America.

The congregation at Marienborn, in the Palatinate, grew until its success attracted the attention of its enemies, when it was abandoned by its members, most of whom went to Crefeld. The Epstein congregation broke up under persecution, and its leaders with most of the congregation also fled to Crefeld. The Crefeld congregation, in Prussia near the Holland border line, is also reported to have endured much persecution. Here the baptizing of six members of the Reformed Church raised a protest from the state church which resulted in a four-year imprisonment sentence for the six members. In addition the ministers were seized and tortured.

But "internal dissension" is held to have hindered the work of this congregation more than did persecution.¹¹ For example, a young minister who dared to marry outside of the church was expelled, against the opposition of many, and this kept one hundred people from joining the group, according to an estimate of one of the church members. Later another minister married outside the church, became

¹¹ Winger's *History and Doctrines of the Church of the Brethren* (1919), p. 21.

a wine merchant, and withdrew from the church, after which the congregation ceased to function.

Emigration to America. — Immediately following the disorganization of the congregation at Crefeld in 1719, Peter Becker, one of the group, led a pilgrimage of some twenty of the families to America. The attention of these emigrants had been indirectly turned toward America through the influence of William Penn, a Quaker from England.¹² Penn, who had experienced imprisonment for his religious beliefs, had gone on a preaching tour through Germany and had set forth the possibility of religious liberty in his new province in America. In addition, he had made known the laws passed by England confirming the "Frame of Government" for his new colony, founded on the land grant made by the King of England to his father in payment for debt. All persons acknowledging one Almighty and Eternal God to be the Creator, Upholder, and Ruler of the world, and pledging themselves in conscience to live peaceably and justly in civil society were given promise of non-molestation.¹³

In 1682-1683 Penn transferred the title of 8000 acres of land in Pennsylvania to four men of Crefeld, and in 1683 a group of thirteen emigrated to America where they founded Germantown. Eleven of the thirteen were Mennonites — members of a religious sect much akin to the Brethren in

¹² The Quakers were dissenters from the established church of England. They were led by George Fox of Leicestershire, who, through his "longing for a higher and a more spiritual life", gathered together enough adherents to establish an organization in 1648. Owing to the incompatibility of doctrines preached, Fox and his followers, including William Penn, suffered persecution. Fox was imprisoned and others were transported to penal colonies. Molestation ceased after the Revolution of 1688 and the doctrines of the Quakers became more or less firmly implanted in Great Britain and America although the number of Friends has never been large.

¹³ Gillin's *The Dunkers a Sociological Interpretation* (1906), pp. 101, 102.

religious belief, economic pursuits, and social customs.¹⁴ Experiencing full freedom of worship in America, the Mennonites sent back glowing reports to the fatherland. The Brethren who received these reports from their fellow townsmen became thoroughly convinced that a place of refuge and opportunity awaited them in America.

Peter Becker and his companions landed at Philadelphia in 1719. Little is known of the trip except that the questions which had caused "internal dissension" at Crefeld were agitated en route. On landing at Philadelphia, the members of the pilgrimage scattered to neighboring regions and settled in different localities.¹⁵ They made no attempt to hold services or to organize a congregation until 1722.

Contacts with people of other sects, however, emphasized among the scattered members a need for group expression. Becker saw this need and started on a tour of visitation among the scattered membership. His visits were fruitful and within three years after landing, members of the group were holding meetings in their own homes in and near Germantown. The first baptismal service of the sect in America took place at Wissahicken Creek on Christmas

¹⁴ Menno Simons, the founder of this sect, played a prominent part in the activities of the Anabaptists at Munster, Westphalia, 1525-1533. Convinced through private reading of his Bible that the doctrines of the Catholic Church were not right and that people were not living as they should, he sought Baptism by a Waldensian follower in 1536. (Walden was a Swiss who sought relief from Catholic persecution during the religious dissension of the twelfth century.) He was appealed to by a group of eight young men to become their spiritual leader. He taught and preached for twenty-two years in Holland, Prussia, and elsewhere. At times he met persecution heroically and at other times he avoided it through taking refuge in countries granting temporary religious liberty to Anabaptist followers. He is held to have pled for help to enemies, charitable deeds in quietness, no infant baptism, no military oath, no bearing of arms, no holding of military or civil office, a severe enforcement of religious bans, and a separation of church and state.

¹⁵ Winger's *History and Doctrines of the Church of the Brethren* (1919), p. 24.

Day, 1723.¹⁶ A love feast was held on the same day at the home of John Gommery, and the Germantown congregation was formally organized with Peter Becker as its elder. Thus the initial step for implanting the Church of the Brethren in America was taken.

Missionary zeal was manifest immediately. Becker with a band of fourteen "visited the scattered members, encouraged those who believed and preached the Gospel to the unconverted."¹⁷ The immediate results of the trip "were eleven baptisms, two congregations organized and two ministers elected. On and on through the pioneer settlements the Brethren ministers pushed forward, witnessing for Christ, comforting the scattered saints, baptising believers, organizing churches and enlarging the kingdom of God."

In America, as in Crefeld, the church body experienced "internal dissension". This began in the Conestoga congregation of which Conrad Beissel was the minister. "Beissel had not been very well indoctrinated and some of his early experience bore fruit in strange teachings." He denounced the marriage state, and advocated the Mosaic law and the seventh day as the Sabbath. He broke with the church in 1728, taking a part of his congregation with him. Later he is reported to have made proselyting trips through the territory of the Brethren.

Except for the arrival of Alexander Mack from Germany the schism caused by Beissel might have been disastrous to the church body. Mack arrived at Germantown in 1729 with one hundred and twenty-six associates, many of whom had received letters of invitation from Brethren relatives and friends in America.

¹⁶ Gillin's *The Dunkers a Sociological Interpretation* (1906), p. 110.

¹⁷ Winger's *History and Doctrines of the Church of the Brethren* (1919), p. 24.

Mack learned of the Beissel controversy on his arrival. Desiring harmony within the ranks, he attempted to turn Beissel's attention again to the welfare of the entire group, but his efforts antagonized Beissel instead. With a number of influential members who had accepted his teachings, Beissel sought a new location on the banks of the Cocalico River, where he founded a communistic settlement, called Ephrata. He drew many recruits to this colony from the ranks of the Brethren, especially after Mack's death in 1735. In spite of the loss of followers to the Ephrata colony the parent church continued to grow in numbers and to move forward under the stimulus of Mack's leadership. Mack was followed by other capable leaders, one of them Alexander Mack, Jr., who "labored for the welfare of the church." Because of the leadership of men of this type Germantown weathered the storms and extended her influence to many neighboring congregations. As growth continued groups pushed out from here and elsewhere into newer, less-settled regions, organizing church bodies throughout Pennsylvania and adjacent Colonies.

The growth of the church from 1724 to 1770 is described as good.¹⁸ "The church prospered. Her elders wrought wisely and well. It was no small matter to travel long distances, preach in private houses, organize new congregations and at the same time maintain a growing family in a new country." The Brethren were all Germans and their message was only to Germans, although the population was dominantly English. Their "success was wonderful".

Westward Expansion. — By 1770 the Brethren organization, consisting of about one thousand members, had reached

¹⁸ Brumbaugh's *A History of the German Baptist Brethren in Europe and America* (1899), p. 333.

western and southern Pennsylvania and northern and eastern Maryland; that is, congregations had been organized or ministers had held meetings in different localities in these regions. Thirty years later it had reached Virginia, West Virginia, Ohio, and Missouri. Another quarter of a century and the Brethren had entered Tennessee, Indiana, and Illinois and had organized congregations there. In 1850 one church had been established in Iowa and twenty-five years later members of the sect had settled in Michigan, Kansas, Nebraska, California, and Oregon, some of them as organizers and ministers of local church groups.

By 1900, approximately two centuries after the founding of the first church at Schwarzenau, "settlements" had been planted in Texas, Arkansas, Oklahoma, Colorado, Utah, Idaho, Washington, and Canada, and the total number of communicants or members in the entire organization was more than one hundred thousand.

RELIGIOUS AND SOCIAL LIFE OF THE BRETHREN

Owing to the fact that they developed out of reaction to the policies of larger church groups which were socially different, the doctrines of the Church of the Brethren pertain primarily to the conduct of the individual. At the time it was founded the Brethren organization represented a small group of like-minded persons, confronted with unfavorable social environment. Heterogeneity of the population prevented the getting together of a larger group. Conditions favored an organization as much unlike that of the orthodox churches as possible. The group was, in consequence, severely Protestant in nature with a set of doctrines which were largely negative in character.

Doctrines. — The "tone" of the doctrines suggests that strict obedience was uppermost in the thought of Mack, the founder, who was eager to have the ordinances as "com-

manded by Christ" accepted and honored. The doctrines and ordinances which were accepted by Mack and his associates included the following ideals:

- a. The Christian life is not a life of correct opinion on matters theological, but a life of piety begun by obedience to the command of Christ to be baptized, which baptism is followed by regeneration.
- b. The church is a holy institution composed of those who manifest regeneration by obedience to the commandments of Christ.
- c. The means whereby the church shall be preserved a holy institution of pious people is the ban as described in Matthew 18.
- d. The ministry is composed of men not highly educated but having scriptural qualifications and chosen from the ranks under the direction of the Holy Spirit.
- e. The initiatory rite of the church is baptism of adults only, through threefold or trine immersion.
- f. The Lord's supper is a full meal, eaten in the evening, for those only who have shown a pious life of obedience. It includes the rite of feet-washing, according to John 13.
- g. The organic law of the church is the Scripture, the New Testament, especially. This contains full provisions for the organization and rites of the church and the statute law of the church, obedience to which is a condition of membership.
- h. The state is an institution ordained of God for the existence of powers of government that do not interfere with the conscience of individuals under its jurisdiction. This includes the refusal to take civil oath and to bear arms in defense of their country.
- i. Simplicity of life, especially of dress. In keeping with this ordinance members of the church dress plainly after a manner that easily distinguishes them from the world. Also, the church stands opposed to questionable amusements such as the theater, balls, dancing, circuses, etc.¹⁹

The fact that the foregoing doctrines and ordinances have been carried down practically unchanged through the generations of two centuries is sufficient proof that they have

¹⁹ Adapted from Brumbaugh's *History of the German Baptist Brethren in Europe and America* (1899); Gillin's *The Dunkers a Sociological Interpretation* (1906); and Winger's *History and Doctrines of the Church of the Brethren* (1919).

been recognized as the highest ideals of pure and upright living. Now, as formerly, questions pertaining to the conduct of different members of the organization are decided according to a literal interpretation of the Scriptures. The power of interpretation in respect to matters of conduct is vested in a governing board which is maintained in connection with the annual meeting or conference of the organization. This board is guided in its decisions by the Scriptures. Where there is no "Thus saith the Lord" applying to a question referred to it, the board makes a decision according to the spirit and meaning of the Scriptures. That decision is the rule of all churches for such cases as it covers; "All churches shall abide by it and any member who shall hinder or oppose it shall be dealt with accordingly."²⁰

Government and the Governing Body.—The highest authority in the organization is vested in a body of delegates sent from the local congregations and from the State church districts to the annual meeting or conference which convenes at various places. There are forty-seven church districts throughout the United States. Delegates are chosen from the elders, ministry, deacons, and laity and may be either men or women. They must conform to the rules and customs of the church as regards plainness of dress, temperate living, and Christian fellowship. The apportionment of delegates is one for each 200 members or fraction thereof.

District meetings are held yearly in each of the various State church districts. They grew out of necessity as a sort of exchange between local congregations and the annual conference. A great deal of the business formerly handled by this higher organization is now disposed of by

²⁰ Winger's *History and Doctrines of the Church of the Brethren* (1919), p. 200.

delegates who assemble at some church in one of the several State districts. Local congregations are represented at the district meetings by an apportionment of delegates determined by these meetings. Qualifications of the delegates for district meetings and for the annual meeting are identical.

The local congregation is the most important governing unit in the organization, since its official duty is to carry into effect the principles and work of the church.²¹ Upon receiving members into membership "it provides an entertainment in which they may grow spiritually or it neglects this and leaves them to care for themselves." The privilege of membership rests with the local congregation which may discipline its members, including its officers, and even expel them, but the defendant has the power of appeal to the district meeting or to the annual meeting for reinstatement in the church.

The local church holds council meetings for the transaction of business, including the election of officers. Each of these meetings is in charge of a presiding elder. In case the council meeting must consider an embarrassing situation, such as the disciplining of a member, an elder from a neighboring church may be asked to preside.

Candidates for membership in the church must pledge themselves to do all in their power to live in peace and harmony with their brethren. The basis of their conduct is laid down in Matthew 18 : 15—"if thy brother shall trespass against thee, go and tell him his fault between thee and him alone : if he shall hear thee, thou hast gained thy brother"—and in the Golden Rule, Matthew 7 : 12—"Therefore all things whatsoever ye would that men should do to you, do ye even so to them : for this is the law and

²¹ Winger's *History and Doctrines of the Church of the Brethren* (1919), p. 203.

the prophets.” Members who become subject to discipline are paid a special visit by a deacon, or by some other authorized member who is considered to have a greater influence on the one in need of discipline.

Deacons of the local congregation are elected by the members, and are installed after having promised to serve faithfully. Their duties include assisting the ministers, looking after the poor, visiting the sick, and the like. In connection with the church services, they may lead in prayer, bear testimony, and read the Scripture lesson.

Ministers are elected by a majority vote of the local church, after prayer and Scripture reading, as a guide in determining qualifications of candidates. If no candidate receives a majority, a second vote is taken, following an additional prayer which precedes an announcement of the vote already taken. Any young man who feels called by the Lord to the ministry may make his desires known to the elders of his church. If his request meets the approval of two-thirds of the local church council, he receives consideration as a candidate.

A candidate for the ministry must be sound in faith and doctrine. “He shall not be guilty of filthy lucre and not worldly-minded, but shall have the mind of Christ and withal shall be willing to suffer hardship as a good soldier of Christ. As exhorted by the Scriptures, the candidate shall make such preparation as will insure an efficiency approved of God.” He is encouraged to take college and Bible training although no educational standard is set for him. If he is unable to secure training at an institution, he may, with whatever help his local congregation may give him, take advantage of a home study course arranged by the Educational Board of the Brethren Church.

The duties of the minister include preaching, administering baptism, and assisting the elders. On proving himself

efficient the minister is ordained an elder. Additional duties of the elders are serving at communions, presiding at council meetings, anointing the sick, managing the church, training the local ministers — of whom there may be an indefinite number — and apportioning them to their duties according to their experience and ability. Such duties, of course, vary in the different congregations.

Ministers who are financially able to do so are encouraged to preach the gospel without pay, a practice followed in the organization from its beginning. Those who are unable to preach without pay are assisted by the church in proportion to the time they devote to the ministry. Churches needing pastors may usually secure them for a reasonable compensation.

Form of Services. — Belief of the Church of the Brethren in the “fundamental doctrines of Christian faith as taught in the Bible and acceptance of the New Testament ordinances as essential” grew out of a reaction toward worship which was considered formal and below the ideals set by the Master. Officials of the church have ever made an earnest attempt to secure the unquestioned allegiance of all Brethren. They have let few opportunities to lead the indifferent and the wayward to the cause of the Master go unheeded.

Preaching services have been foremost among the forms of worship. Sermons are delivered regularly. Results secured through them “depend upon the spiritual power and the intellectual ability of the messenger”.²² Sermons delivered by some of the ministers are little more than mere pleas or exhortations.

The sermons are preceded and followed by earnest prayer offered by one or more of the ministers or deacons.

²² Winger's *History and Doctrines of the Church of the Brethren* (1919), p. 228.

The prayers are usually long and sometimes tedious to younger members of the congregation. Each is usually concluded with the Lord's Prayer. Prayer is offered while members of the congregation kneel. Prayer covering is worn by each of the sisters.

Singing forms an important part of each service. In many of the churches it is conducted without the aid of a musical instrument, owing to the fact that the piano has not been sanctioned by the governing board of the organization. Without accompaniment, singing is often far short of what may be termed music, but in many of the local churches trained choristers are available, and in spite of the lack of musical instruments, some of the choristers have been able to get splendid harmony from the congregations.

The Sunday school, which is comparatively new with the Brethren, has been encouraged and promoted during the past quarter of a century, by means of a general Sunday school board. The local school is under the supervision of a superintendent, assisted by a chorister. Graded lessons are now used and approximately 200,000 pieces of literature are distributed annually. "A five-year standard set recently by the Sunday school board, includes among its aims 100 new schools started, \$40,000 for missions, 15,000 new pupils, prayerful effort to lead unconverted attendants to Christ and daily study of the Sunday school lesson from the open Bible."²³

The Christian Workers' Meeting, a fairly recent organization, provides practical work for the young people of the church. Local groups of this organization hold Sunday evening programs in which both old and young persons take part. Programs usually include topics assigned to different members for special study and discussion. Participa-

²³ Winger's *History and Doctrines of the Church of the Brethren* (1919), p. 185.

tion in these programs tends to develop "the thinking and speaking of the young people."²⁴

The annual love feast is regarded as one of the main "seasons" of worship by the Church of the Brethren. It is often the occasion for visits from neighboring elders and pastors, and provides a means of deepening the religious life and broadening the social realm of the local congregation. The feasts usually convene on Saturday afternoon. The sermon of the afternoon is followed by the Lord's supper, a full meal, which is concluded with the "bread", the "cup", the handshake, the holy kiss, and a "God bless you". Just preceding the eating of the supper which is covered on the table the rite of feet-washing is administered according to John 13 : 4-5 — "He laid aside his garments; and took a towel, and girded himself. After that he poureth water into a basin, and began to wash the disciples' feet, and to wipe them with the towel wherewith he was girded." Both brethren and sisters, each sex at different tables, participate in the service. A brief sermon or a prayer concludes the evening program. The love feast closes with Sunday services which are identical with those of other Sundays, except that the prayer may be offered and the sermon may be delivered by a visiting preacher.

Previous to the love feast, members of the local church are visited by one of the ministers, deacons, or laity. This is for the purpose of strengthening the bond of Christian fellowship. These visits, in the boyhood days of the writer, were occasions for reverence and prayer. They tended to renew the faith of the "visited" in the gospel.

The love feast has been a great social influence in the life of the Brethren. It has provided a common "meeting level" for all members of the local unit. The meals have

²⁴ Winger's *History and Doctrines of the Church of the Brethren* (1919), p. 225.

had a social air about them not provided in any other way in the average Brethren community, and the meetings are anticipated with pleasure by both adults and children. Sunday services concluding the feasts are attended by larger audiences than usual both by members and non-members of the church. The exchange of greetings and ideas preceding and following the different services creates a feeling of friendliness and a spirit of loyalty to the church.

Benevolence. — The Church of the Brethren has always held the relief of its poor and dependents as a duty. Members of the local congregations are quick to help one another in distress. In addition, the church body for more than a century has provided for poor widows and their children. For more than a half century it has encouraged the building and maintenance of homes for its aged and its orphans. At present it has fifteen of these homes, using 1500 acres of land, and valued at \$150,000. These are conveniently located throughout the various church districts.

Industries and Occupations. — The Brethren are primarily an agricultural people. Driven from the fertile lands of the Rhine Valley, the founders of the organization turned westward to the lands of William Penn. They had heard of the agricultural advantages of the lands and the opportunities in Pennsylvania. They had been told that the land raised farm crops, fruits, and garden produce in abundance. Their attention had been called to the luxuriant grasses upon which horses and cattle could be raised and kept. "The land is full of buffaloes and elk", they had been told, "twenty or thirty of which were found together."²⁵ They had been informed that they might find flesh enough to eat from wild animals and that they could

²⁵ Gillin's *The Dunkers a Sociological Interpretation* (1906), quoting from Pennypacker's *Historical and Biographical Sketches*, p. 186.

thereby live better than the richest nobleman. Such a description might have attracted the most unworthy from any land of "oppression", but the fact that the Brethren emigrants came from a high type of farming population has long been unquestioned. They showed their judgment in their tendency to settle in fertile valleys in this country and in the zeal with which they cleared the land and planted it to crops. John L. Gillin holds that the Brethren are primarily farmers, ever alive to their business interests and quick to seize opportunities offered.²⁶ "Their appreciation is keen in matters pertaining to agriculture they are alive to the greatest discoveries, buy the most improved farm machinery, take the best farm papers and attend county and state fairs in order to keep abreast of all that is best in the world in which they are concerned."

It should be noted, however, that not all Brethren are farmers. There are Brethren business men, produce dealers, artisans, and laborers in some cities. There are also active produce dealers, carpenters, teamsters, and the like, among the Brethren in many villages.

Education. — During the century and a quarter following their arrival in America the Brethren were indifferent and even hostile to higher education. With the exception of Christopher Sauer, Jr., and a few like-minded followers, they looked upon higher learning as a process following which the "educated would fail to return to the humble ways of the Lord." Sauer's father, Christopher Sauer, Sr., a graduate of Marburg University in Germany, is credited with the honor of "transplanting German printing to the New World He edited and printed the first German newspaper in America and issued books, pamphlets and magazines in great profusion He was actuated by

²⁶ Gillin's *The Dunkers a Sociological Interpretation* (1906).

the big purpose of providing the most useful reading matter for his fellow countrymen in their new environment.”²⁷

Christopher Sauer, Jr., led in the founding of the Germantown Academy in 1759. Later he served as president of the board of trustees of the Academy. He is characterized as having been favorable to education, and he was an active champion of a broad and liberal education. His interest in behalf of the Germantown Academy was largely non-sectarian. His devotion to education was based upon a broad charity for the poor and needy.

In spite of Sauer's interest in education, the Brethren continued to regard learning as contrary to their religious well-being far into the nineteenth century. As late as 1852 the annual meeting voted unfavorably on the question, “How is it considered by the Brethren if the Brethren aid and assist in the building of great houses for high schools and send their children to the same?” It was the opinion of the meeting that the Brethren should be cautious of minding the high things of life and should condescend to men of low estate.²⁸

By 1850, however, the church included a few friends of education. This number increased gradually and the sentiment for a higher education than that of the common school became too great to be resisted. The period of hostility and indifference to education changed to one of favor, through contacts with individuals and groups of other sects. This was inevitable in the great movement of expansion whereby the Brethren were brought face to face with leaders of other groups. Elements of superiority in these leaders and in many other individuals with whom they came

²⁷ Flory's *Literary Activities of the Brethren in the Eighteenth Century* (1908), p. 38.

²⁸ *Minutes of the Annual Meeting of the General Mission Board*, 1909, p. 130.

in contact were a challenge for higher education in the Church of the Brethren. The challenge was accepted. The first Brethren school was opened at New Vienna, Ohio, in 1861, and the first college was established at Bourbon, Northern Indiana District, in 1870.

The little "leaven" grew rapidly. During the half century between 1870 and 1920, the church established ten colleges, which it is now maintaining in a creditable manner. All of these colleges are under the supervision of a general educational board, appointed at the annual meeting, as provided for in 1890. This board consists of seven members "whose duty it is to watch over the moral and religious influence of the schools and to see that the principles of the Gospel and church government be carried out as defined by the Annual Meeting."²⁹ The board has recently adopted a positive policy. It plans to carry the forward movement of the church into its colleges and is striving for a realization of the following aims :

- a. Thirty-five hundred students enrolled, with five per cent pursuing regular college courses.
- b. Three hundred thousand dollars raised for endowments.
- c. Twenty per cent of all students in regular Bible study, twenty per cent looking forward to definite Christian service and fifty per cent dedicating their lives to the ministry or to mission work.

In the past the main contribution of the Church of the Brethren to society has been "a great mediocre class of substantial, worldly-wise, industrious, economical, peaceful, moral and religious citizens, possessed with more than the common virtues and with few vices."³⁰ With the beginning of the twentieth century, however, we find coming from

²⁹ Winger's *History and Doctrines of the Church of the Brethren* (1919), p. 176.

³⁰ Gillin's *The Dunkers a Sociological Interpretation* (1906), p. 213.

their ranks men of intellectual ability and promise—including Professor M. G. Brumbaugh, University of Pennsylvania; ex-Governor Brumbaugh of Pennsylvania; D. L. Miller, traveler and lecturer; and Dr. D. W. Kurtz, president of McPherson College. With the growing interest in education as exemplified in the Brethren schools and colleges many more men of this type will undoubtedly take their places among the leaders of the world.

Citizenship and Government.—At the time the Church of the Brethren was founded the doctrines and ordinances included the idea of non-resistance—that is, the refusal to bear arms—and the refusal to take civil oath. Members of similar groups which had preceded the Brethren had been persecuted for their belief in matters which were held to belong to the “conscience”. The refusal to take an oath may be traced back to the fact that this was held to be the sacred instrument of the state which had abused them. It might also be explained by the Biblical injunction against the taking of oaths.

During the World War the Brethren as an organization held firmly to the principle of non-combatant service. At the same time, they joined whole heartedly in the work of relief and reconstruction. Different congregations pledged liberal financial support to the various lines of moral and religious welfare work among the soldiers.

Although the Brethren have always “tried to keep free from entanglements of government”, they have not made the renunciation of voting and office holding tests of fellowship. Members have not been encouraged to vote or to hold office, however. To do either has been regarded as giving up the principle of non-resistance, since governments, to some extent at least, are based on force. On the other hand, “members have always been urged to be loyal to govern-

ments as far as consistent with religious convictions". In recent years the church has taken a more active interest in local, State, and national government to the extent of urging members to vote and of permitting them to hold public office.

The Brethren have seldom resorted to law for the settlement of difficulties. Any member who desires to "go to law" must first have the consent of the church officials. Manifold decisions handed down from the governing bodies of the various annual meetings prove conclusively that the Brethren hold neither the use nor the practice of law in accordance with the Gospel. This position seems logical when it is recalled that relationships among the members of the society are based primarily upon the observance of the Golden Rule. Often, however, church trials cause as much unpleasant publicity in the community as a trial at law would occasion.

Marriage.—In earlier years, marriage outside of the church was punishable by expulsion. At the present time, marriage outside the church is common and such a marriage usually results in the "conversion" of the non-member into the organization. While intermarriage, often through several generations, has been noted in many communities, kinship marriage has not yet become common enough to produce any noticeable defects. The Brethren family continues to be the primary source of membership in each locality.³¹ When that source is exhausted the church may cease to grow, both in numbers and in vitality.

In its endeavor to maintain purity of life and the marriage relation, the church for many years excluded from its membership "any one who had two living companions." Fornication and adultery have always been looked upon

³¹ Gillin's *The Dunkers a Sociological Interpretation* (1906), p. 221.

as "grave sins, and sufficient grounds to cause any member to forfeit his membership."³²

Temperance.—The Brethren have held tenaciously to their original stand against intemperance. The use of liquor in any form has always been forbidden. Decisions against the manufacture, sale, and keeping of liquor are recorded in minutes of the annual meetings of 1781, 1832, and 1846 respectively. While the church does not sanction the use of tobacco, it does not make its non-use a test of fellowship, except with ministers and delegates to its district and annual meetings.

The church is in sympathy and accord with the purity reform movement. The annual conference of 1919 "made it the duty of the Temperance Committee to encourage teaching along these lines and to do all possible to promote the movement for greater purity in personal life and conduct."

Dress.—The custom of plain dressing, a symbol of plain living, may be attributed to opposition to the "over-refined and elegantly dressed" in the churches during and immediately following the Reformation. Reasons for maintaining plainness of dress, at present, are based on the modesty of dress taught by Jesus and his Apostles. The particular form of dress, which seems to have held remarkably well for a century, is described in the following recommendations of a special dress committee which reported at the annual conference in 1917.³³

- a. The Brethren shall wear the hair and beard in a plain and sanitary manner. They, especially the ministers and deacons, shall

³² Winger's *History and Doctrines of the Church of the Brethren* (1919), p. 222.

³³ There was no one established form of dress among the Brethren during the first century of the existence of the church. In order to enforce plainness of dress the annual conferences prescribed a particular form.

wear the coat with the standing collar and are urgently advised to refrain from wearing a tie or other unnecessary articles of adornment.

b. The sisters shall wear plainly-made garments, free from all ornaments and unnecessary appendages, a plain bonnet or hood as a head-dress, and their hair in a becoming Christian manner.

c. No one shall wear gold for ornament or jewelry.

Indications of "some very strained relations" over the question of dress are gleaned from the minutes of a number of the annual conferences. The report of the committee on dress to the conference of 1917 states that "the Church of the Brethren throughout her entire history stood firmly against the fashions of the age and extravagance in all manner of living and on the other hand has taught the principles of simplicity of life and personal appearance. The conference has from time to time adopted means and methods with a view of maintaining gospel simplicity in dress in the church body."

The committee recommended that no brother be installed as minister or deacon and that no brother or sister serve as delegate to a district or annual meeting, who does not observe the order of dress. In addition it was to be the duty of the church to teach faithfully and intelligently the simple Christian standard of dress. Finally, those who refused to conform to the method set forth and "followed the foolish fashions of the world were to be dealt with as disorderly members; and in the dealing both the salvation of souls and the purity of the church were to be kept in view."

Decisions of this type are supposed to be observed in general at the present time, but they are fully effective only in congregations in the open country and in the small towns.³⁴ In larger centers of wider and more varied social contacts particular form of dress has given way to practices

³⁴ Gillin's *The Dunkers a Sociological Interpretation* (1906), p. 217.

which render the Brethren non-conspicuous members of society.

Recreation and Amusements.—There seems to be no historical basis for the refusal of the church to participate in recreational activities, including games, celebrations, and entertainments. It is reasonable to assume, however, that this refusal grew out of an earnest desire of the founders and early followers to put aside all things worldly. Participation in fairs, theaters, celebrations, games, dancing, and secret societies was formerly regarded as sinful and might be punishable by expulsion. Recently, however, members desiring to attend fairs, picnics, and other recreational activities have done so, without fear of incurring church discipline.

In many congregations patriotic celebrations have taken the form of well-planned, sane, religious, and social programs. These, however, have failed to attract and hold the undivided interest of the young people. Group games including baseball and volley ball are common in some communities. Theaters, moving pictures, and dancing are still unsanctioned and membership in any secret society disqualifies a member from fellowship in most of the rural congregations.

Dissension.—It should not be presumed that the Church of the Brethren has come through two centuries of progress without differences of opinion and difficulties. In several instances pressure brought to bear through counteracting social influences resulted in dissolution. New sects arose as branch organizations in various parts of the United States, including the New Dunker, the Far Western, the Bowman, the Old Order, and the Progressive. The remaining body, with which we are concerned here, is known as the conservative group. Of the branch organizations named

above, only the Old Order and the Progressive need be considered further. The former developed, or "remained" rather, out of opposition to a number of proposed changes. These included high schools, Sunday schools, protracted meetings, a paid ministry, and the single mode of feet-washing. The Progressive element, on the other hand, favored better education, especially of the church ministry. In addition, they were impatient at the insistence on church ritual and simplicity in dress "while many of the vital questions of the day were scarcely noticed." The Progressives represented the younger members of the organization, primarily those who had attended high schools and had access to newspapers and magazines. They were followers of H. L. Holsinger, publisher of the *Christian Family Companion* and advocate of a "free rostrum for the discussion of all subjects pertaining to the church." Holsinger started the *Progressive Christian* in 1878, with the avowed purpose of advocating progressive measures and reforms, "including a better educated ministry." This paper declared it wrong to concentrate so much power in the hands of ignorant elders, many of whom could scarcely read a chapter in the Bible intelligently.³⁵ It broke the last bond of union between the conservative and the progressive elements in 1880, the year in which the Old Order withdrew from the parent organization. Thus, individuals of the Progressive group began to realize the value of actual social contact with the world at large.

Both the Old Order and the Progressive Brethren now have a fair-sized following.

Cohesion. — Since the division cited above the conservative element has moved steadily forward along many lines

³⁵ Winger's *History and Doctrines of the Church of the Brethren* (1919), p. 110.

of progress. According to John L. Gillin, this was due largely to the fact that the church, not wishing to lose additional members to the Progressives, relaxed her coercion of the individual sufficiently to allow more spontaneity of action.³⁶ A wide social intercourse and a means of communication was accepted. Schools and colleges which were soon established were rapidly filled with students. Gradually, the social life of the group underwent a great change. The main goal of making people good gave way to a dynamic ethical force having for its aim the production of men of polish, culture, aggressiveness, vision, and constructive ability. At present, members of the Church of the Brethren are taking their places among the educated men of other religious denominations. Well may we conclude with Gillin that, "if the Brethren can adopt what the world has to give him and yet keep the solid strength and the deep moral earnestness of his past history, his personality will be none the poorer and society at large will be much the richer. Thus, will he be able to make his great contribution to the social life of which he is a part."³⁷

ORGANIZATION AND GROWTH OF THE ENGLISH RIVER CONGREGATION

In their westward movement in quest of homes and of undeveloped territory over which to spread their gospel, the Brethren reached the fertile valleys of Ohio, Indiana, Illinois, eastern Missouri, and Iowa by the middle of the Nineteenth Century. Growth and expansion of the parent body resulted from the establishment of Brethren "settlements" as members of the sect pushed on westward. The English River congregation near South English, Iowa, constitutes one of these settlements. In general, it is typical

³⁶ Gillin's *The Dunkers a Sociological Interpretation* (1906), p. 196.

³⁷ Gillin's *The Dunkers a Sociological Interpretation* (1906), p. 225.

in both origin and development of most of the rural congregations established.³⁸

Location. — During the summer of 1854, a group of five families, including a minister, left Allen County, Ohio, in search of a favorable location.³⁹ They journeyed westward to Mount Vernon, in Linn County, Iowa, where they were welcomed by others of their sect. The five men left their families near Mount Vernon, and were joined by four men of the Mount Vernon group, none of whom had families, in continuation of their search for a desirable location.⁴⁰ According to notes kept by one of them, these men spent about six weeks on a "locating trip". In their "exploration" they arrived at the two-room cabin home of an early settler near South English at the opening of Sunday religious services which were being conducted by a Christian minister. The minister of the Brethren group responded to an invitation from the Christian minister to preach. This was regarded as a union service.

Similar services were held Sunday after Sunday for some time following. The Christians, the Methodists, the Baptists, and the Brethren coöperated in conducting them. Gradually, as these different denominations gained local strength, through the arrival of members from other sections and through conversions, and as places of worship such as homes, barns, and schoolhouses became available, the locality became organized into separate church groups.

³⁸ See Zigler's *History of the Brethren in Virginia*; Winger's *Indiana History of the Church of the Brethren*; Blough's *Western Pennsylvania*; Gibson's *Southern Illinois*; Snyder's *Middle Iowa*; and similar publications issued by the Brethren Publishing House.

³⁹ The group included David Brower, minister, Solomon Wine, Daniel Wine, Jonas Stoner, and their families.

⁴⁰ These four men were Daniel and Abe Stoner, John Riggle, and Solomon Cramer.

Organization of the Congregation.—The nine Brethren were joined by their families in September, 1854. The organization of the Church of the Brethren is recorded as having taken place during the fall of 1855 in connection with a love feast which was held at the home of one of the members, near the site of the present church building.⁴¹ Shortly preceding the date of organization the original group was enlarged by the arrival of co-workers, chiefly from Virginia. Various records show a charter membership of from 12 to 30, the majority of these records favoring the higher number. The minister of the group was ordained as elder and placed in charge of the congregation. Two members were selected as deacons.⁴²

Regular church services at that time were held "in school-houses and in a few scattered cabin homes in the usual pioneer ways." The Brethren held no services at night except when visiting ministers were present or during the observance of communion. Necessary light for meetings at night had to be furnished by tallow candles or by the more common lard lamps. Church activities of the Brethren soon centered at the Liberty schoolhouse, which was built in 1855 or 1856, near the site of the present church building. According to notes which were kept by a pioneer settler this building "was a small frame structure with desks made of broad rough boards. The seats were made of rough slabs and the blackboard was a couple of painted planks. It stood a little east of where the church now stands and was used for a number of years by them as a meeting house."⁴³ This building was inadequate for the love feast

⁴¹ This took place at the home of Solomon Wine, forty rods west of where the present church now stands.

⁴² David Brower was ordained as elder and Samuel Flory and Daniel Wine were installed as deacons.

⁴³ Blaylock's *My School, Past, Present and Future* (1904).

or communion services and from 1856 to 1859 they were held in a large shed built expressly for the purpose. The sidewalls and roof of this shed were of prairie grass, cured as hay. From 1859 to 1865, when the present church building was erected, these services were held in one of several large barns which had become adjuncts to some of the farmsteads of the neighborhood or community.

The church building erected in 1865 was 40 x 60 feet in size. It was soon enlarged by the addition of a kitchen or workroom required in the preparation of the meal for the love feast. It was remodeled about 1905 and fitted with central heating and lighting systems, and with several small Sunday school rooms which open off the auditorium. The building is still in use. Though plain in appearance, it is a substantial structure owing to the care and upkeep it has received.

Early Missionary Activities.—Early activities of the local congregation were not confined to the immediate locality or neighborhood. Different ministers of the Brethren sect held preaching services for several years following 1854 in the schoolhouse near Rodman's Point, now South English. Brethren ministers preached also to audiences gathered at the various groves and schoolhouses of the neighboring localities, "scattered over the vast prairies". The trips to and from those places of worship had to be made on horseback or on foot. It is reported that some of the ministers serving in this way walked eight or ten miles both going and returning, and felt well repaid for their efforts.

Three active church groups are at present evidence of the far-reaching influence of the English River congregation of the early days. South Keokuk, about 20 miles south, near Ollie, Iowa, was organized in 1858. The church at

Brooklyn, Iowa, approximately forty miles northwest, was started in 1866 from the Deep River congregation which grew out of the English River congregation in 1865. North Church in North English, a branch of the English River group, was conducted in a building erected in 1889. It was organized as a separate congregation in 1916.

Four local churches which were organized by the English River group are now dissolved. These include Deep River, mentioned above, Middle Creek, Oak Grove, and Crooked Creek. Dissolution of these congregations is held to have been due to lack of leadership, lack of coöperation, and failure to hold the young people.

Complementary Church Organization. — The dates of the beginnings of several church activities and organizations are of interest. The first local Sunday school was organized in 1877. For almost a score of years Sunday school services were held semi-monthly. Since that time they have been held weekly. The first series of revival "meetings" took place during the winter of 1875-1876. "Social meetings", now known as Christian Workers' Meetings, began in 1893. The annual Bible school started two years later. This is a two weeks study of the Bible led by a special teacher from Mount Morris College or Bethany Bible School.

The first Ladies' Aid Society, known as the "Sisters' Aid", was organized about the year 1900. This is engaged in furthering active service of some form at the present time. The chief purpose of this society at the time of its organization was the "fitting out" of members as they came into the church; that is, helping them to provide clothing where needed and assisting them in designing or shaping the various articles of "the dress" after the customary form of the Brethren. More recently the program of work of this organization has centered on the making of wearing

apparel and the sending of both clothing and other provisions to several different homes for orphans or aged people. "Many boxes and barrels of goods have been sent, while poor at home have not been neglected."

The local congregation has borne its part in the establishment and support of the Brethren Old Folks' Home, which is located at Marshalltown, Iowa. It has furnished one member on the Board of Trustees ever since the home was established in 1904. During the preceding twenty years, it has also been well represented on child rescue and temperance committees.

Since the adoption of the delegate system by the annual meeting or conference the local church has not failed to send its representatives to attend these meetings.

Membership.—No record of membership is available for the congregation from the date of organization in 1855 until 1897. Notes kept by one of the members whose father served as a minister and elder during the early years of the congregation show 105 members in 1880, the date of division of the parent church body into Progressive, Old Order, and Conservative, and 184 members in 1897.⁴⁴ This is an increase of approximately 150 members in fifty years if the larger number, thirty, is accepted for membership at the time the congregation was organized.

Complete records of membership of the local church kept by the member referred to above, for the years from 1897 to 1919 are given in the table on the next page.

Membership received or lost by letter implies no exchange with churches of other denominations. The term "disowned" includes dismissal of those considered detrimental to the local organization as well as approval of requests by

⁴⁴ The notes referred to were kept by A. H. Brower, whose father served as an elder from 1871 to 1879.

members for disconnection. The large number lost by letter in 1917 includes 45 members who went to the North

MEMBERSHIP STATISTICS, 1897-1919							
YEAR	BAP-TISMS	RECEIVED BY LETTER	RE-CLAIMED	LOST BY LETTER	DEATH	DIS-OWNED	MEMBER-SHIP
1897	1	2	1	12		1	184
1898	5	7		3		8	179
1899	25	4	1	8	7	1	193
1900	8	6		6	4		197
1901	3	7	1	7	3	1	197
1902	1	4		9	2	3	188
1903	5	10		10	1	3	189
1904	5	7		3	2	1	195
1905	9	2		16	4		186
1906	5	9		14	6	3	177
1907	16	9		16	7	5	174
1908	15	2		12	2	2	175
1909	2	13		5	1	4	180
1910		1	1	6	2		174
1911	18	10		11	3	7	181
1912	1	13		8	1	1	185
1913	5	11		14	3	3	181
1914	19	12	2	10	3		201
1915	8	28	1	2	4		232
1916	13	8		4	5	1	243
1917	13	12		53	3	1	211
1918	4	4	2	12	5	4	200
1919		7		17	3	4	183

English church, at the time of the division of the local congregation in 1916.

Neighboring Church Activities in 1920.—The organization of local congregations of other sects kept pace with that of the Brethren during early settlement of the territory surrounding them. The Methodists organized a local group

prior to 1858. They constructed a church building in the village of South English in 1858 and replaced it with a larger building in 1910. The membership of the Methodist Church ranges between 120 and 125. Their services are limited to regular Sunday school activities and to preaching by a circuit pastor once a week on alternate Sunday mornings and evenings. A church building erected by the Christians in 1872 is still standing. It is used for Sunday school services only. This Christian congregation now consists of only 45 members and has been unable to support a minister during the past fifteen years. The building which was erected by the Baptists in 1864 was moved near the center of the village and remodeled in 1909.

Local church groups of Kinross, approximately three miles east of the Brethren church, include Methodist, Christian, and Catholic. The Methodist church building was erected in 1902. It was closed during the past year. The Christian church was built in 1899. It was replaced by another building in 1917 and this is in use at present. The Christians have employed a resident pastor since 1918. Their membership is approximately one hundred and fifty. The Catholic structure erected in 1907 now serves as a place of worship for about sixty-five members.

Mention should be made of the organization of a Mennonite congregation about 1900. This group erected a house of worship two miles south of the Brethren church building. This building is in use at present. The Mennonites, with a resident pastor, hold Sunday school and preaching services regularly. They have a membership of sixty.

Economic and Social Development of Neighborhood and Community.—According to notes kept by early settlers of South English the locality chosen by the Brethren bordered on the edge of the great prairie to the south and east as

well as on the timbered regions to the north and west. "The big prairie between there and Washington, about 25 miles southeast, was given over to deer and wolves. The wisest of us could see no way by which this prairie could be settled, there being no way to build fences, to keep warm nor to roast wild turkey, except with native timber and that was about all taken up by settlers who had preceded us along the timber line. Another reason why the prairie might not be settled was because thousands of acres of it were under water a good portion of the year. But, the deer and the wolves soon yielded to the settlers of which the Brethren congregation constituted a considerable part. The tall prairie grasses gave way to crops of corn, wheat and flax. A team of ponies, or more commonly a yoke of oxen, hitched to a walking plow broke the soil. Wheat was sown in the spring mostly on corn stubble land without plowing. It was cut with the cradle, bound by hand and threshed with the chaff piler. If the chaff piler was not available the grain was tramped or flailed. No attention was paid to meadows since wild hay could be had for the cutting. Farming, at first, was not on a very extensive scale. Twenty acres of corn, 20 of wheat and 10 of oats was considered quite a farm."⁴⁵

As a trading point Rodman's Tavern served the interests of the Brethren settlers and their neighbors. It was located in the "Old Town" of South English. It was a pioneer store and post office, "large enough to absorb all the cash of the settlers without doing much of a mercantile business either. Dimensions of the cabin housing the business, as well as the business man and his family, were 12 ft x 16 ft."⁴⁶

⁴⁵ W. D. Hall's local newspaper clippings, 1902, obtained from files kept by Mrs. Leah Coffman.

⁴⁶ Seerley's *Old Settlers' Day Address*, South English, Iowa, 1907.

Mail reached the tavern by means of a stagecoach from Iowa City, then the State capital of Iowa, to Sigourney, the county seat of Keokuk County. The storekeeper's supply of goods was replenished from either end of the stage route, the latter of which had no railroad facilities.

Considerable trading, including the marketing of farm produce, was done at Iowa City and Cedar Rapids, forty and fifty miles east and northeast, and later at Washington, twenty-five miles southeast. "It was next to impossible to get meal or flour without going to Cedar Rapids and owing to bad roads it was nearly impossible to make the trip and return with any considerable amount of provisions. A two-yoke team of oxen often stuck with four barrels of flour."⁴⁷

Gradually these difficulties were overcome. Assistance to each other as new families arrived, together with the building of railroads and the establishment of additional towns soon removed some of the hardships of pioneering. The first railroad within reach of the community was built in 1871. It lay eight miles to the south and extended west to Oskaloosa. The town of Harper, eight miles south, became the nearest railroad station. The Burlington, Cedar Rapids, and Northern Railroad (now the Chicago, Rock Island, and Pacific) connecting Muscatine, Cedar Rapids, and Iowa City with Montezuma was constructed in 1879. It passed through South English. The village of Kinross, five miles east of South English, started with the establishment of a post office there in 1880. The Chicago, Milwaukee, and St. Paul Railroad constructed a branch line from Cedar Rapids to Ottumwa in 1884. This passed through North English, about six miles northwest of the Brethren church building.

By 1890 the local church group had pushed out from the

⁴⁷ Hall's local newspaper clippings.

center of its settlement through the major part of an area touching South English on the west, Harper on the south, Kinross on the east, and North English on the north. North English had become a field for an additional house of worship, built in 1889. The area was cut across from east to west by the English River, approximately two miles north of the present church building. In 1916 the river was taken as a dividing line between the two congregations.

Native timber which was available north and west of the settlement was turned into lumber necessary for building purposes. This was supplemented occasionally from the markets at Burlington, and Muscatine, river towns on the Mississippi some sixty miles east. "It seems but yesterday", stated one of the pioneers at an old settlers' meeting in 1907, "that my father hauled the logs of oak, walnut and basswood from the wooded hills of the north and west to the saw mill. He planed the rough boards during the winter for siding and finishing the house."⁴⁸ Sills were hewn and shingles were rived from logs of oak. The task of building was "the occasion for earnest coöperation among members of the community. Each settler was a builder." Several of the pioneer houses of the congregation, built about 1854, are in use at present. They are large, serviceable, non-modern structures in fair condition.

Pioneer life in the community was markedly different from the life of the present. Practically all food was prepared and all clothing made in the home. "If we wanted meat", said one of the pioneers, "we killed a wind-splitter hog. If that was not to be found we resorted to deer, wild turkey, wild goose, squirrel, prairie chicken or quail. We had considerable range of choices in the preparation of corn for the table, among which was a long trip to the mill, grinding by hand on a grain or coffee mill, making the corn into

⁴⁸ Seerley's *Old Settlers' Day Address*, South English, Iowa, 1907.

hominy, or boiling and grating it. Any one of these methods proved very satisfactory since no man or woman ever went to bed hungry or made apologies to callers because they had nothing to eat."⁴⁹

Each family had its spinning wheel for both wool and flax, as well as its loom for weaving the cloth from which practically all articles of clothing were made. Carding, spinning, coloring, weaving, and tailoring, carried on in the separate homes, consumed most of the leisure time of different members of the family. Most of the boots and shoes were made by the village cobbler. Shopping was noticeably limited. "It was a long way to the nearest stores and most of the settlers had nothing better than lumber wagons drawn by teams of oxen."

According to the best information the local church group was favorable to the establishment and development of public schools. Many family names now found in the congregation appear in the school registers as far back as 1854-1855 in both the Liberty and the South English districts.⁵⁰ Several pupils of both these schools have since held responsible positions, including a doctor of medicine, a mechanic, and a teacher. One of the pioneer Brethren taught the Liberty school during the winter of 1854 and 1855 and another taught at least a term there several years later. By 1900, a few boys and girls from Brethren homes were availing themselves of high school opportunities through paying the required tuition at the South English high school.

Elections for civil officers were held near the present site of South English as early as 1852. The voting precinct at

⁴⁹ Hall's local newspaper clippings.

⁵⁰ The local congregation centers in Liberty school district. The church building originally stood just west of the schoolhouse and about one-fourth mile east of it after the schoolhouse was moved to its present location.

this point consisted of three townships, including Liberty and English River. Voting was usually carried on at the home of a pioneer. At the elections which were held a justice of the peace and a constable were to be selected, the former "to solemnize marriages and try cases and the latter to keep the peace." Apparently there was little need for more officers since "the pioneers were men who unanimously paid their debts, lived within their means, and honored manliness and virtue. They had no use for the criminal, the law breaker or the indolent." The pioneers of this section organized the Horse Thief Detective Agency and since the law breaker did not care to run the risk of turning out the entire community, property was left alone. "There were no locks on the doors of the homes. None were needed. The honor of manhood was sufficient to protect property."⁵¹ Although the Brethren of those days took no part in voting and probably had little or nothing to do with the above named association, they were undoubtedly under obligations to both of these agencies for mutual benefits.

The Brethren neither patronized nor approved of saloons. "When I was a boy", states one of the present members of the church, in response to the question of the stand taken by the local congregation against the use of liquor, "there were three saloons in South English. The Brethren did not patronize them. Our people would never sign a petition for anyone to sell whiskey or anything of the kind even for medical purposes unless they had the confidence that the right granted through such petition would never be abused. As time went on it became much harder for the saloons to run. We advised strongly against patronizing them and many of us would not enter them, even on business not pertaining to them, except in cases of extreme need. I do not remember that the saloon question ever came to a vote but

⁵¹ Seerley's *Old Settlers' Day Address*, South English, Iowa, 1907.

if it did those Brethren who voted, voted against it. It is 35 years since there was a saloon in South English."

According to records kept and to incidents related by several of the pioneers of South English, social life in the Brethren neighborhood and its surrounding community was enjoyable, inspiring, and uplifting in the early days. Homer H. Seerley says of these social events : "In addition to the customary school work there were the weekly spelling schools, biweekly lyceums and Sunday evening singing schools. I feel some pride in our early spelling schools where one night each week during winters the best spellers gathered in one or other of the neighboring schoolhouses. Good order prevailed. We never had a row because my school always did the best to assist me and the example was good. The lyceum encouraged every man, woman and child to take part. Programs consisted of essays, recitations, dialogs and debates. Its objectives were intellectual betterment, culture and progress."⁵²

The general social activities of the larger community were supplemented by the "affairs of social interest" within the local congregation. One of these was the annual love feast, "which was always a community affair", says another pioneer. "The church used to invite us to supper following the communion service. We enjoyed this hospitality year after year until young rowdies began to take advantage of those good Brethren people with many practices of misbehavior. This lack of behavior continued, in spite of the fact that special parties from town were appointed to keep order, until finally the Brethren abandoned the practice of inviting the public to supper."

Unifying Influences.—Until recent years major interests affecting the local congregation appear to have favored

⁵² Seerley's *Old Settlers' Day Address*, South English, Iowa, 1907.

unification rather than dissolution. Personal contacts of the Brethren with the world at large were from the coming of members from other congregations, from attendance of delegates at district and annual meetings, and from limited missionary journeys to and from neighboring congregations.

Religious "practices" or customs, including the plain dress and the close communion, the refusal to bear arms and to take the civil oath, and the non-participation in government to the extent of refusing to vote tended to bind the local group into a unit. Avoidance of the use of law for the settlement of difficulties, the lack of agitation for higher education and the relatively small number of children of other denominations in the local schools attended primarily by Brethren children, the limitation on participation in certain public gatherings and celebrations, and, finally, the tendency to marry within the denomination if not within the local group were also binding influences. Coöperative tendencies, strongly exemplified in the building of homes for newcomers, in aiding the poor, and in caring for the sick were equally unifying factors.

The forces which, about 1880, caused the dissolution of the parent body into Progressive, Conservative, and Old Order, had little influence on the local congregation. Unofficial records show only four members lost to the Progressives and only five members lost to the Old Order Brethren from the time of the beginning of those organizations until recently.⁵³ Two of those lost to the latter body have been recovered. Several families are reported as having gone to the Old Order Brethren during the past year

⁵³ According to one unofficial report one of the four Progressives started the "missionary activities" which resulted in the erection of the church building in North English about 1890. This group was served by ministers from the parent congregation during the nineties, however, and was organized as a local congregation of the Conservatives in 1916.

owing to dissatisfaction of one sort or other. There is no Old Order congregation close enough to permit of their regular attendance at church services, however.

Productiveness of the land has aided in keeping the local congregation intact. Once under cultivation the land produced, and continued to produce, in spite of the fact that little attention was given to the maintenance of fertility through the feeding of live stock. Farming proved a profitable occupation and the land increased in value in even greater proportion than it did in adjoining localities or communities. Few crop failures from drouth, hail, or other causes have been experienced by members of the local group.

Thus far the factors favoring unity have outweighed the tendencies toward dissolution of the local congregation. It is questionable how long this will continue to be true, however. The influences which have contributed to group solidarity appear to be weakening. Seclusion of the local group is becoming more difficult. Barriers to travel and other means of communication are disappearing. Business contacts with the outer world are increasing. Formal education is broadening the outlook. Social participation with other groups is increasing. In view of these and other changes which are beginning to affect the solidarity of the local group a social study or analysis of the congregation is of interest.

SOCIAL STUDY OF THE LOCAL CONGREGATION

A social study of the local congregation was conducted by the survey method in 1920. Visits were made to 47 of the 65 homes represented in the membership of the congregation. The information obtained from these visits pertained to the composition of the family; birthplaces of the parents; education, including schooling, of the different

members of the family; farm business aspects, including farm practices; family living conditions; and recreation activities and opportunities. It was recorded on survey blanks or schedules prepared especially for the purpose. The information for 17 of the schedules was secured from the male head of the family, for 15 it was secured from the female head, and for 15 it was secured from both.

Thirty-nine of the 47 families lived in the open country and 8 lived in the village of South English. Thirty-five of the families were engaged in farming. Two other families living in the open country had retired on the home farms and two had retired on smaller (ten-acre) farms near the church. The eight families which lived in the village included three retired farmers, one teamster, three widows, and one unmarried woman.

The 35 active farmers comprised 22 owners, 9 tenants, and 4 hired men. Three of the hired men were employed by the month and one was employed by the day throughout the year. Three of the owners and one of the tenants were ministers. One of the owner-ministers placed farming subsidiary to church work.

Composition of the Family. — The term, family, as here used refers to the persons who were living at home at the time of the survey. Adult sons and daughters who had left home are not included in the parental family. The parentage of 9 husbands and 8 wives in the families visited is accounted for in 9 other families included in the study. Several young people now in college are considered members of the families visited. There were 177 persons in the 47 homes of the study, including 43 male and 47 female heads of families. The 87 children were distributed among sex and age groups, as indicated in the table on the following page.

The average age of male heads of families amounted to 44 years, compared to an average age of 42.5 years for the female heads of families. The average size of family was 3.8 persons. This was lower than a similar average for the State as a whole which in 1920 was 4.1.⁵⁴

AGE	MALE	FEMALE	TOTAL
5 or less	16	14	30
6 - 10	12	8	20
11 - 15	6	5	11
16 - 20	9	9	18
21 or more	4	4	8
Total	47	40	87

Birthplace of Parents. — Twenty-one of the 43 male heads of families were born in Iowa, 15 in Virginia, 5 in Illinois, 1 in Missouri, and 1 in Indiana. Twenty-seven of the 47 female heads were born in Iowa, 10 in Virginia, 3 in Pennsylvania, 3 in Illinois, 2 in Indiana, 1 in Ohio, and 1 in Colorado. Parents of 33 of the male heads of families were born in Virginia; 3 had parents born in Virginia and Iowa, 2 in Virginia and Pennsylvania, 2 in Iowa and Pennsylvania, 1 in Ohio, 1 in Indiana, and 1 in Illinois. Parents of 25 of the female heads of families were born in Virginia, of 7 in Iowa, of 3 in Pennsylvania, of 3 in Ohio, of 2 each in Ohio and Indiana, and Ohio and Virginia, and of 1 each in Illinois and West Virginia, Iowa and Pennsylvania, Iowa and Virginia, Ohio and Switzerland, and Ohio and Germany respectively. Nativity of the female heads of families, as well as of their immediate ancestors, shows the wider range.

The data in the preceding paragraph bear out the prevalent opinion that the English River congregation is pri-

⁵⁴ *United States Census, 1920, Vol. II, p. 1267.*

marily of "Virginia origin". While the first group of pioneers came from Allen County, Ohio, the homes of the majority of their followers seem to have been the better farming sections of Virginia, especially the Shenandoah Valley.

Schooling. — Twelve of the 43 male heads of families had had more than eight grades of schooling or its equivalent. With the exception of one high school graduate, however, none of the 12 had gone beyond the tenth grade. Three of them had taken some work, including special Bible study, at the Mount Morris Academy. Another, a minister, had spent two years at the Bethany Bible Institute. The high school graduate had completed one year's work at Mount Morris College and had attended the Iowa State Teachers College during one summer term. Nine of the female heads of families had had high school work. Two of them were twelfth grade graduates, three had been students at the Mount Morris Academy, and two had taken special work at the Iowa State Teachers College. One of the two completed the two-year teachers' training course. Four of the nine had taught at some time in the rural schools of Virginia or Iowa.

Nine of the boys had taken some high school work. Two of these had graduated from the twelfth grade, two dropped out in the eleventh grade, and the others were enrolled in school at the time of the study. Four of the girls were in high school. Another girl, a high school graduate, with six weeks normal training, was serving as a rural school teacher. One boy and one girl were attending the Mount Morris Academy.

None of the parents of the heads of families included in the study had had more than eight grades of schooling. Fathers of two of the heads of families had been teachers.

Fathers of sixteen of them and brothers of eighteen of them had served as Brethren ministers.

The above figures indicate the lack of hostility, as well as indifference to, formal schooling of members of the local congregation. A further indication of this lack of hostility to education is gleaned from the answers to the questions of whether consolidated schools and better State institutions of higher learning, involving higher taxes, were favored. Twenty-five of the persons questioned favored higher taxes for consolidated schools, twelve opposed them, and nine were undecided. Seven of the favorable answers were qualified with "if for the best interest of education", "if the transportation problem can be solved", "if the school can be located in the open country and made a community center", "if consolidation does not mean a new building for a year or two", "voted against the plan proposed to get consolidation in our district", and "consolidate the schools, with higher taxes if necessary". Six of the unfavorable answers were qualified with, "not a good thing for the state of Iowa", "rural school is better if it could be had", "tuition plan in village serves as well", "transportation is the main draw back", "children are on the road too long", and "children are not benefited by being on the road from two to four hours a day".

Seventeen of the replies to the question, "Do you favor better State institutions of higher learning, involving or necessitating higher taxes?", were in the affirmative and eleven were in the negative. Nineteen of the persons questioned were undecided. Five of the affirmative answers were qualified with, "they mean better opportunities", "I like to see men educated", "I think we need educated men", "better State institutions, higher taxes if necessary", and "if higher taxes are needed". Two of the negative answers were qualified with, "I like to see better schools, but taxes

are high enough", and "how do they (State institutions) help the farmer?" About half of the undecisive answers were in the form of, "I don't feel much concerned about such things", "I'm not well enough read to answer", or "I can't answer intelligently".

According to the opinions expressed by several of the persons visited, a closer relationship between the farmers and the State College of Agriculture would prove a decided advantage to the welfare of the neighborhood. Two of the men who had attended a farmers' short course several years ago felt well repaid for time and money spent in doing so. Three others expressed opinions to the effect that more advantage should be taken of help offered by the State College of Agriculture as a means of securing better results in farming.

Fifteen of 39 farm families were receiving or had received at one time or another bulletins from the State College of Agriculture. Ten of the 15, in addition to 3 others, were familiar with the farmers' bulletins of the United States Department of Agriculture. Three farmers stated that they received benefits from the State Agricultural Experiment Station work through the columns of several farm journals.

Farm Business Aspects.—The size of farms operated by the 22 owners ranged from 52 to 280 acres with an average of 144.4 acres per farm. For the 9 tenants the range was from 80 to 268 acres, with an average of 148.4 acres. The average size of farm for both owners and tenants is about midway between similar averages for Keokuk County and the State — 135.5 acres and 164.9 acres respectively.⁵⁵

The average value of farm land, drawn from estimates as high as \$500 per acre on the one hand and as low as \$200

⁵⁵ *Census of Iowa, 1915.*

per acre on the other hand was \$333 per acre for the 31 farms. A part of the wide range in estimated land values was due to differences in topography : the more rolling or rougher the land, the lower the estimated value placed on it. Some of the range in estimated values was attributed to differences in improvements on the land.

Four of the 31 farms included in the study changed hands during the year ending April 30, 1920. This was to be expected, however, since several farms not included in the study within the neighborhood and a relatively large number outside the neighborhood changed hands during the same period.

An indication of the diversity of farm operations may be gained from the average number of acres devoted to the three principal farm crop enterprises for the year of study.

	AVERAGE NUMBER OF ACRES PER FARM IN CROPS		
	Corn	Oats	Hay
All farm operators (31)	46	29	11
Owner operators (22)	45	28	9
Tenant operators (9)	48	31	16

Fifteen of the owners and seven of the tenants kept hogs and cattle. Five of the owners, and two of the tenants kept hogs only. Two of the owners raised no hogs or cattle other than for securing meat and milk for family living uses. One of the tenants had a fair-size flock of sheep. Twenty of the owners sold both corn and oats from the farm. One sold corn, and one sold oats only. Two bought corn for fattening stock, primarily cattle which were shipped in car load lots when finished.

The 22 owner operators employed paid labor for approximately 4 months per year, on an average. In addition they

used unpaid labor amounting to the equivalent of a farm hand for 4 months per farm per year, primarily boys over fifteen years of age in the family. The tenant operators employed hired labor for 5.3 months per farm per year. There was no unpaid labor on the tenant farms. The wages paid per month to employed farm hands averaged \$68 for owner operators, compared to \$58 for tenant operators. Room, board, laundry, and pasture for a horse were furnished in addition to money wages paid to hired men who were housed with the employer's family.

The wages received by three of the four hired men with families, employed by the month, were \$68 per month on an average. The wage of the fourth, a day laborer, was \$3.50 per day. In addition to money wages, each of these four families received perquisites in the form of house, fuel, garden plot, and pasture and feed for horse, cow, pigs, and poultry for home use.

With one exception all of the tenants were renting on a "share-of-crop-and-stock" basis. In general, landlord and tenant each received half of the returns from crop and stock sales. One tenant paid cash rental on the larger part of crop land, including the farmstead. Four of the tenants were sons or sons-in-law of the landlords. Two of them were nephews of the landlords. The other tenants bore no kinship to their landlords.

The prevalence of certain items of farm equipment and machinery is shown from the following statistics. Of the 22 owner operators, 8 had silos, 2 had grain elevators, 16 had gas engines, and 20 had automobiles. Of the 9 tenant operators, 3 had silos, 3 grain elevators, 6 gas engines, and 8 automobiles. Three of the 31 farmers were hiring tractor-plowing done at from \$3.00 to \$3.50 per acre. The majority of them were driving 5-horse teams to double-bottom plows. "Two-horse" farming is no longer practised in the locality.

Fourteen of the 31 farmers kept some purebred live stock—horses, cattle, or hogs. Three used registered purebred Percheron mares. One had registered Shorthorn cattle and another had registered Poland China hogs. "Purebreds" seem to be growing in favor in the neighborhood. One farmer who dealt in registered horses and cattle conducted the business under a farm name, in partnership with his two sons.

The automobile was considered a means of furthering the farm business, as well as a necessity from the standpoint of church attendance and family visiting. Although it was adopted as a means of conveyance here at a later date than in the adjoining localities and in the nearby villages, it is now looked upon as a necessary farm fixture.

Family Living Conditions.—The average number of rooms per house and the prevalence of certain kinds of modern improvements in the home are shown in the table below.

CLASSIFICATION AND NUMBER OF HOMES	AVERAGE NUMBER OF ROOMS PER HOUSE	NUMBER OF HOMES HAVING				
		RUNNING HOT AND COLD WATER	BATHROOM AND TOILET	CENTRAL HEATING SYSTEM	CENTRAL LIGHTING SYSTEM	POWER WASHING MACHINE
All farm homes (39)	7.7	15	15	11	9	16
Owner homes (22)	8.2	8	8	6	4	10
Tenant homes (9)	8.0	4	4	2	2	3
Hired man homes (4)	5.5	1	1	1	0	1
Retired farmer homes (4)	7.5	2	2	2	3	2
Village homes (8)	5.6	1	1	0	6	0

In addition to those listed above, one farm home had water piped into the kitchen. Another had a sanitary indoor closet. Electric current in two of the homes included

above was furnished from individual farm plants and storage batteries.

None of the homes were supplied with labor saving conveniences such as a pressure cooker, fireless cooker, or vacuum cleaner. With access to a "high line" which will provide electric current for village and open country in parts of southeastern Iowa, many farm homes of the locality will doubtless resort to the use of electrical appliances. One family had already installed a motor-driven washer. Two of the homes occupied by owners had sleeping porches — not in use, at the time — and two had glassed-in sun porches or parlors.

In general, the farmsteads of the neighborhood were neat and well kept. Houses, barns, and outbuildings showed evidence of upkeep, from the standpoint of both repair and painting. The houses and barns were large. Eight of the 31 farmsteads operated by owners and tenants had two barns, one large and the other medium in size. Barns were well supplemented by other buildings including cribs, granaries, hog houses, machine sheds, garages, and occasionally a workshop. A number of the farmsteads showed a poor arrangement of buildings, with regard to convenience in chores and to protection from disagreeable weather. The four country homes occupied by retired farmers compared favorably with all others. Gardens and lawns in connection with these homes were especially well cared for. All of the 39 farmsteads had large lawns which gave evidence of care and attention.

The type of architecture of the houses seemed out of balance. Often the house appeared to stand out too conspicuously against an open skyline rather than to blend with natural surroundings. This was true especially where no windbreak or grove of trees was located at the rear of the farmstead. In all cases there was a lack of coziness

and attractiveness which could be provided from the planting of additional trees and shrubbery, the former at irregular distances in groups at the rear of the farmstead and the latter in properly arranged clumps on the lawn.

Farm orchards showed unmistakable evidence of lack of care. Twenty of the farmsteads had traces of old orchards which had disappeared through neglect. Young orchards ten to fifteen years old on twelve of the farms appeared fairly thrifty. A young orchard was being set out on one farm. Three of the farms had no orchards. No home was without a vegetable garden. Several of the families had access to small fruits, including strawberries, bush fruits, and grapes.

The prevalence of musical instruments in 47 homes is shown below.

CLASSIFICATION AND NUMBER OF FAMILIES	PIANO	ORGAN	PHONOGRAPH
All families (47)	11	15	11
Owner families (22)	8	8	8
Tenant families (9)	3	4	1
Hired man families (4)	0	0	0
Retired farmer families (4)	0	0	2
Village families (8)	0	3	0

Four of the homes had both a piano or organ and a phonograph. General music was reported played in twenty-three of the homes, which were provided with musical instruments.

Reading matter in the homes consisted of books and church publications, including the *Gospel Messenger*, daily papers, local papers, farm journals, and general magazines. Home libraries, most of which consisted of books of a religious nature for the most part, were not widely used, except by ministers or others interested in church work, Sun-

day school, or Christian Workers' Meeting. The average number of books in the home library and the number of families which subscribed to the *Gospel Messenger* and to local and daily newspapers are shown below.

CLASSIFICATION AND NUMBER OF FAMILIES	NUMBER OF BOOKS	GOSPEL MESSENGER	LOCAL NEWSPAPER	DAILY NEWSPAPER
All families (47)	60	46	33	35
Owner families (22)	82	21	18	16
Tenant families (9)	52	9	9	9
Hired man families (4)	22	4	2	2
Retired farm families (4)	60	4	0	3
Village families (8)	33	8	4	5

Twenty-nine of the 47 families subscribed to the *Missionary Visitor* or the *Brethren Year Book* in addition to the *Gospel Messenger*. All of these publications are issued by the Brethren Publishing House at Elgin, Illinois.

The local papers taken included the *Keokuk County News*, the *Sigourney Review* — both published at Sigourney, the county seat — the *North English Record* and the *Keota Eagle*. No local paper is published in either South English or Kinross. Seven families took two local papers and seven took two daily papers.

The daily papers which were taken included the *Des Moines Register and Leader*, the *Drover's Journal*, the *Davenport Times*, the *Chicago Tribune*, the *Chicago Herald and Examiner*, the *Cedar Rapids Republican*, and the *Kansas City Star*, listed in order of the number of subscribers.

Among the 47 families there were 75 subscriptions to farm journals. The different journals with the number of families taking each were : *Wallaces' Farmer*, 28; *Successful Farming*, 13; *Farm Journal*, 11; *Iowa Homestead*,

9; *Breeder's Gazette* and *Country Gentlemen*, 3 each; *Farm and Fireside*, 2; and *Power Farming*, *Farm and Home*, *Kimball's Dairy Farmer*, *Indiana Farmer*, *American Rabbit Journal*, and *Spotted Poland China Booster*, 1 each.

The general magazines which were taken with the number of families taking each were : *Ladies' Home Journal*, 6; *Pictorial Review* and *McCall's*, 3 each; *World Outlook*, *Saturday Evening Post*, *Today's Housewife*, and *Christian Herald*, 2 each; and *Youth's Companion*, *Mother's Magazine*, *American Pathfinder*, *Woman's Home Companion*, and *Modern Priscilla*, 1 each. Fifteen of the 47 families took no general magazines. One family took 4 general magazines, in addition to 3 farm journals and the *Gospel Messenger*.

Participation in Recreational and Social Activities.—Participation in recreational and other social activities depends to some extent on the available leisure time, which in turn may depend on the length of the work day. The length of work day, based on the breakfast and supper hour inclusive, ranged from 5:30 A. M. to 8:00 P. M. The serving time of breakfast averaged 6:00 o'clock for the 35 families engaged in active farm operations and 6:15 o'clock for the 12 retired farmer and village families. The time of serving supper averaged 6:45 and 6:10 o'clock respectively. After a deduction of 45 minutes for breakfast and 1 hour for dinner was made, the actual work day was 11 hours long.

The pressure of farm work was given by several of those who were interviewed as the cause of too little family visiting in the neighborhood. In 36 of the 47 families, visiting was limited to Sundays. The other families visited during week days also, four of them on week day afternoons and three of them on week day evenings. The visiting of 29

families was chiefly among relatives and church people. That of the 18 other families was less limited to families of the Brethren denomination. The Sunday visits usually followed the morning church service, until chore time in the evening. As many as three or four families often participated in these gatherings, where all enjoyed the sociability which accompanies a well-prepared Sunday dinner.

Eighteen replies to the question, "Do people visit as much as formerly?", were in the negative. The principal reasons given for this were lack of time and failure to be sociable. Chief among the suggestions for bettering this situation was "Open the homes more than we do", which was given by 9 of the 18 interviewed who thought people visited less than formerly. Seven of these 9 suggestions were further emphasized with, "encourage our young folks to be together", "have well planned entertainments", "plan with them and not for them", "have well directed programs and games", "have parties like we used to have", "provide wholesome entertainment", and "have more sociability". Other suggestions for bettering the situation in regard to visiting included : "encourage young folks to meet to play games", "provide books and magazines of general interest", "learn to be more sociable", "be more neighborly", "take time to go during the week", and "have more social gatherings".

Recreations in the home included reading, music, games, Bible study, and church work. In eighteen instances, reading and music constituted the principal recreational activities. In three instances, music alone was regarded as affording enough pastime. Seven families which had no musical instruments found sufficient diversion in reading. Four families played games and two enjoyed trips to the woods, in addition to music and reading. Four families gave reading and work and two families gave Bible study

and church work as pastimes. The seven other families specified no definite pastime or recreational activity.

Thirty-six answers to the question, "Do you favor games in the home?", were in the affirmative and seven were in the negative. Four replies were to the effect that games of the right kind, only, were approved. Forty-five of the parties questioned were opposed to card playing. Two saw no "harm in cards if played properly", that is, if played without cheating or gambling. Flinch, checkers, and chess were played in two homes where cards were disapproved. With one exception, all parties interviewed were opposed to dancing.

For the most part, regular social gatherings within the neighborhood of the local congregation are limited to the Christian Workers' Meeting which is conducted by adults and young people at the church each Sunday evening. The program rendered at this meeting is more religious in nature than is the average program of the Epworth League, the Christian Endeavor, or the Baptist Young People's Union. The primary aim of the local Christian Workers' group is in accord with that of the parent organization "to do definite practical Christian work. It is not an aid society or social club but it is the church organized for work — the service department of the church."⁵⁶ Locally the meetings are regarded as "social" in nature, however. The local group regarded itself as constituting a part of the personnel of the "Society". Through careful planning of the program all members of the church, young people especially, served as leaders or other participants of the Sunday evening meetings.

A larger local gathering regarded as social in nature takes place annually on the Fourth of July. This centers at the church. The greater part of the day is given over

⁵⁶ See *Brethren Year Book*, 1920, p. 25.

to a sermon of a patriotic nature and to a basket dinner which follows it. The program is continued at one of the homes during the evening where the program consists of games and "visiting". Formerly adults and young people met separately. The plan adopted the last two years whereby all meet together is proving more satisfactory. Practically all families attend these meetings. Only three families reported attendance at outside Fourth of July celebrations.

The need for more social gathering — group activities of a social nature — is felt by many persons of the congregation. Seventeen of the 47 parties interviewed, chiefly leaders in the church, expressed a desire for games or other recreational activities in which adults and young people might participate. Some suggestions as to just what these games or activities should be were given. Three were in favor of baseball, and seven were in favor of games in which all could take part.

Opinions as to where these activities should be held differed. Two of the persons who expressed a desire for them favored the church as a meeting place. Ten of the informants opposed the church as a recreation center, and five were undecided on this question. Those who opposed the church as a meeting place gave no definite reasons, while those who favored it held that people might as well meet at the church as elsewhere for all properly supervised activities.

The local congregation, as well as the community, has lacked literary society work for the twenty years preceding the survey. The last "literaries" conducted by the young folks were held at the Locust Grove schoolhouse, one and one-half miles south of the church, during the winter of 1899-1900. The programs consisted of songs, recitations, and debates. These meetings were recalled with pleasant

recollections by a majority of the persons who were interviewed.

A revival of interest in the "old time spelling school" occurred during the winter of 1903-1904 in connection with a "thousand word" contest which was conducted throughout the county by the county superintendent of schools, but no attempt was made locally at continuing these spelling programs during winters following.

The majority of the persons visited regarded the Chautauqua and the lyceum course as beneficial "community" activities. It is during the last decade only, however, that they have had the privilege of attending the Chautauqua. A few of them have attended the five-day Chautauqua held regularly at South English the past several seasons. Most of those who have not attended, attributed their lack of attendance to the stress of farm work or to the fact that certain numbers of the program were not up to standard in quality. The number of families represented by the attendance of at least one member at one Chautauqua program during the past year is shown below.

CLASSIFICATION AND NUMBER OF FAMILIES	CHAUTAUQUA	LYCEUM	STATE FAIR	COUNTY FAIR
All farm families (39)	34	24	25	8
Owner families (22)	21	14	13	3
Tenant families (9)	9	6	8	4
Hired man families (4)	3	3	3	1
Retired farm families (4)	1	1	1	0
Village families (8)	5	5	2	2

Lyceum or other entertainment courses have been promoted irregularly by the high school pupils of South Eng-

lish and Kinross. Attendance at these programs, which have consisted of lectures and musical numbers, was limited to one or more persons from 29 of the 47 families during the past year.

In five of the families which contributed to Chautauqua and lecture course attendance the children only attended. Four families not represented in the attendance at Chautauquas and lecture courses as specified above attended one or more special lectures given in the church during the year preceding the survey.

Attendance at State and county fairs was limited usually to one or two persons per family. "The husband or the boys go occasionally or were there once" is characteristic of the majority of the replies to the question concerning attendance at the fairs.

Lack of greater attendance at the State fair is due in part to inconvenience in making the trip. The State fair is held at Des Moines, a day's journey from South English by railroad. The trip may be made direct from Harper, nine miles south, in three or four hours. It may be made by auto, also, provided the roads are favorable. The county fair is held at What Cheer, some twenty miles west. It is easily accessible by train. Until recently this fair has given very little attention to the exhibition of farm produce, stock, and poultry or to other aspects of farming and rural living.

Four of the farmers who had never attended the State or county fairs held that a fair "is a good thing" and that "it makes for better farming". Two others expressed the idea that some sort of a local agricultural fair might be found worth while.

Membership in Farm Organizations and Coöperation. — Only 8 of the 39 farmers were Farm Bureau members. One of these was president of the township unit and another

was a director of the county organization. The president of the county organization, not a member of the Brethren group and not included in the survey, lives in the neighborhood of the congregation, within a half mile of the church building.

Ten of the 39 farmers believed they got definite aid from the Farm Bureau, 19 expressed themselves as getting no aid from this organization, and 10 were undecided on this point. Six of the 13 replies to the question, "Can the Farm Bureau be made a definite means of helping the farmer?", were in the affirmative. These were qualified with "if they get a practical man for county agent", "if farmers will take an interest in it", "if farmers get thoroughly organized", "it gives help indirectly now", and "it will prove its value in time". The remainder of the 13 replies were in the form of, "don't know since I don't attend the meetings", "can't tell, yet", and "it's too new to tell much about it".

Several farmers held memberships in the Farmers' Union, an organization centered in the community west of South English, although the advisability of maintaining two farm organizations was questioned by some of the members, who were eager to know what the Farmers' Union of the State planned to do for the farmers.

A number of farmers included in the study were members of the Farmers' Shipping Association, an organization started recently as a means of securing a more direct market for the sale of live stock and for the purchase of farm supplies. Several who had been members had withdrawn from this organization, on the charge of mismanagement. Those who had withdrawn were "satisfied with the old way of selling and buying". Their feeling that the profits taken by local stock buyers and by the Farmers' Grain and Lumber Company of South English were exorbitant apparently became less pronounced after a trial at actual coöperation

in the Shipping Association. Seven farmers included in the study held stock in the Farmers' Grain and Lumber Company and six held stock in the Farmers' Savings Bank, both of South English.

The spirit of coöperation so characteristic of earlier times in the neighborhood of the Brethren congregation was regarded by several of the farmers with whom it was discussed as being noticeably "on the wane". Among the probable reasons given for this were that the farmers were too busy to coöperate and the "change of the times" during the preceding 20 or 30 years.

Fifteen of the 39 farmers included in the study responded to the question, "What is the biggest problem confronting farmers of your neighborhood or community?" These responses included "better roads", "coöperation", "learning to coöperate", "price fluctuation; market drops when cattle and hogs are ready", "lack of leadership", "securing labor", "control of packing house profiteers and land speculators", "prevention of strikes working against interest of farmers", "unsteady market; price is usually off when hogs are ready", "being forced to sell stock at prices below cost of production", "low prices of produce and high cost of farm necessities", "improvement of farm life", "high cost of tankage and other feeds which the farmers have found necessary", and "hard to tell which problem is biggest".

Hard surfaced roads were favored by 18 of the 47 parties who were interviewed and opposed by 16. Six of the responses which favored surfaced roads were qualified with "surfaced roads must come in Iowa", "we need all the improvements we can get on roads", "I'm working hard to get them", "they are coming in Iowa", "if secured in a conservative way", and "if for nothing more than the coming generation". Five of the responses opposing surfaced

roads were emphasized with the expressions, "we're not ready for them", "dirt roads are good enough", or "dirt roads are satisfactory".

At the time the survey was conducted roads of the locality were almost impassable. Owing to heavy rains, poorly-drained places were rutted until cars could scarcely be driven over them. Owing to this situation the percentage of answers favoring surfaced roads may have been higher than it would have been during a period when roads were good.

According to the study, members of the Brethren congregation are sharing an interest in and giving passive support to governmental activities. Three-fourths of the eligible male voters voted at the general election in November, 1918. "Voting was heavy" at a recent election on the question of the consolidation of local public schools. Some of the women reported voting on this occasion. The percentage of eligibles in the congregation who vote at the elections for local, State, and national offices appears to be increasing.

The congregation carried its part in the financial support of general activities during the World War. The rumor of one or two attempts to evade selective service exists but there is no substantial evidence in proof of the fact. Three of the young men included in the survey entered the service under the last selective draft. Two of these were in training less than two months when the Armistice was signed and the other served a year in motor corps work overseas.

Morality and Civil Life.—The determination of the moral tone or standard of any neighborhood or community is exceedingly difficult. Moral codes embody more than a registration of proceedings on the record books of county, township, village, or church organization. Many immoral

acts escape the attention of courts and church groups, while others appear to lie outside of the reach of either of these.

The settlement of difficulties through the church rather than by law credits the local congregation with few records of court proceedings. This, however, does not mean that the church method of procedure continues to be as efficient as formerly or that it is now held by all parties interested as being entirely satisfactory. The opinion that courts would settle quarrels of neighborhood significance more quickly, more quietly, and more justly appears to be gaining ground in the community.

During the past twenty years the local church dealt with not less than ten cases each of which has assumed community-wide publicity. That these might have been handled as satisfactorily and with less publicity through civil courts is probable. Two families of the congregation were dissolved through divorce within the past decade. Three illegitimate births, in connection with each of which families of the church were implicated, occurred during this same decade. The larger community surrounding the congregation and including the villages of South English and Kinross is recorded as having ten divorces and twenty-five illegitimate births within the two decades preceding the survey in 1920.

The moral tone of a neighborhood or a community can not be discerned altogether, however, by the number of immoral acts recorded in its disfavor; consideration must be given to the opinions of the leaders within or concerned about the welfare of the neighborhood or community.

Seven out of ten leaders within the congregation, including ministers, deacons, and laymen, responded affirmatively to the question, "Is the moral tone of the neighborhood or community rising?" Two of these felt that the moral tone was not rising as rapidly as it should. The question was

discussed with five persons outside of the congregation, yet within the immediate community, including leaders and Sunday school officers in neighboring churches. Four of these agreed that the moral tone was rising. Evidence in support of the four affirmative answers included the abandonment of the "cooler", the temporary lodging place for peace disturbers in South English, the absence of drunken men on the streets and highways, and the increasing percentage of church workers among business men of the village.

The five leaders outside the congregation viewed the question largely from the standpoint of the entire community, including the village. On the other hand the Brethren leaders appeared to look at the situation primarily from the standpoint of the immediate neighborhood. Neither of these groups, however, ignored the influence of all church groups in the endeavor to maintain the highest possible moral standard for the entire community.

Fifteen leaders — ten of the Brethren and five from the community — responded to the question, "What is the greatest need of the church to maintain ordinances and traditions, to interest the young people in spiritual growth and to have the widest influence in the neighborhood or community?" Responses of the Brethren leaders with reference to the maintenance of ordinances and traditions were : "study them more", "study, teaching and practice", "better teaching and reasoning", "better teaching, more preaching", "more study, better class of teaching", "teach more Gospel", "occasional teaching is sufficient", "give less attention to doctrines and traditions", "not necessary to maintain all of them", and "not concerned with traditions". Three of the five leaders of other denominations responded to this phase of the question with, "sound Bible teaching, including reasoning", "well enough

maintained through present day preaching”, and “not important in our church”. The other two of these five leaders answered that they had nothing to say on this point.

Suggestions from the Brethren leaders on how to interest the young people in spiritual growth included : “become more spiritual ourselves”, “give them a chance to do active work”, “give them something to do”, “have well directed activities”, “provide better leadership”, “give more freedom”, “have more social life”, and “entertain them”. Suggestions from the five leaders from other denominations were : “see that older people do the right thing”, “let those in the church live better lives”, “let all coöperate and pull together”, “have higher standards for adults”, and “provide a good pastor”.

Needs suggested by the Brethren leaders for widening the influence of the church in the neighborhood or community included : “live nearer the Gospel”, “live according to the teaching of the Gospel”, “get those in the church to live up to their professions”, “apply the Golden Rule”, “bring young people together more”, “open the church for social uses”, “give practical active Christian service”, and “organize all forces of the community for constructive work”. Suggestions of the five leaders from outside the Brethren Church on this point were : “get those in the church to live better lives”, “get all to do right”, “be especially friendly”, “have organized effort along social lines”, and “have higher standards for adults in the church”.

The fifteen leaders responded also to the question, “From the standpoint of the neighborhood or community, what is the biggest problem or task confronting your local church?” The responses received from the Brethren leaders included : “saving young people”, “developing leaders for the continuation of church work”, “keeping young

people interested", "holding the interest of young folks", "keeping the members active", "getting the members to live the simple life", and "getting people to live up to their profession". Responses from the leaders of other denominations to this question were : "knocking out selfishness", "getting organized social and religious effort", "maintaining principles and showing the world the need of a Savior", "getting people to attend services", and "getting people really converted".

Church Membership and Religious Activities.—In 38 of the 47 families both the husband and wife were members of the Brethren congregation. Two husbands who were members of the Brethren had wives belonging to churches of other denominations, and two wives who were members of the Brethren had husbands who were non-church members. The four women who operated their own households in South English were members. Only one family studied had no direct connection with the Brethren group; the husband was a non-church member and the wife belonged to another denomination. Seventeen of the 31 children from 6 to 15 years of age were members of the Church of the Brethren. Twenty-one of the 26 who were 16 years of age or over were members. One child of this group belonged to a church of another sect. The adult male membership, 40 in all, included 3 elders, 1 minister, and 7 deacons. The total membership included in addition 17 other leaders of church activities — the president and vice president of the Christian Workers' Meeting, and the superintendent, assistant superintendent, teachers, and assistant teachers of the Sunday school. Nine of these leaders were high school graduates or had attended college, either Mount Morris or the Iowa State Teachers College, for at least a semester.

The membership of the church is represented in 65 fam-

ilies, 46 of which were included in the survey.⁵⁷ The local congregation is under the supervision and care of 3 elders, 1 minister, and 10 deacons. No records of church attendance are available. Regular church attendance was held to be slightly higher than the attendance at Sunday school which averaged 93, 135, and 92 persons respectively for the years 1915, 1917, and 1919. The lower figure for 1919 was held to be due to sickness, chiefly "flu".

Money raised for the support of all church work increased from about \$50 in 1880 to \$400 in 1900 and to about \$1200 in 1919. The expenditure for home mission work amounted to less than \$200 in 1900, \$555 in 1911, and \$725 in 1919. Assisted by the Sunday school of the North English church the local Sunday school now supports a missionary worker in China.

A budget of \$3000 for the first year's allotment of the Interchurch World Movement fund was raised by the local congregation during the last week of April, 1920. It seems probable that this amount will be increased annually during the next four years. In general, the Interchurch World Movement met with favor throughout the congregation. Several members expressed a feeling of uncertainty, however, as to just what the movement might accomplish.

Financially, the local congregation has held its own, as compared with the neighboring congregations of other denominations. The membership also has remained steady or shown a slight increase. The supreme test of any local church, however, lies not in the matter of funds or of membership but in its power to gain and hold the interest of the young people, that is, to fit them for the best possible service to humanity. Whether the local Church of the Brethren is gaining or losing ground in this respect is

⁵⁷ As noted above one family in the survey had no membership in the congregation.

difficult to determine. The opinions of all leaders and workers in the local congregation were sought in connection with this point.

Fifteen of the 29 leaders and workers with whom the matter was discussed felt that the church was not holding the interest of the young people as it had in years past. The other 14 were of the opinion that the opposite was true. The majority of the 14 agreed with the other 15, however, in declaring that the interest of the young people was not held as it should be. Among the suggestions for improvement in this respect were more social life, better educated ministers, a new church, a piano in the church, less restraint in regard to dress, and the development of a community center like that of the Brethren congregation in Orange Township, Black Hawk County, Iowa.⁵⁸

Thirteen of the 29 leaders expressed an opinion concerning the use of a piano in the church. Seven of these favored its use and six opposed it. Those who favored its use held that a piano "would be found a great help in Sunday school and Christian Workers' Meetings", "that it would be much help to the chorister", that it "had as well be in the church as in the home", or that "other Brethren churches had pianos". Those who opposed its use gave as their chief reason, "such things must be kept out of the church".

Fifteen of the 29 leaders expressed themselves on the matter of restraint with particular reference to dress. Six of these held that the church was placing too much emphasis

⁵⁸ In the Orange Township community the church and the consolidated school form a religious, social, and educational center in which farmers are "retiring". Through various activities including church services, musical programs, and well-directed recreation, games, etc., interest of the young people has been held, notwithstanding the fact that the city of Waterloo is not far distant. In fact, the close proximity of the city seems to have acted as a challenge to the local congregation to provide clean rural entertainment well enough diversified to hold the interest of its young people.

on restraint. Reasons given in substantiation of five of these answers were : "form makes little difference so long as people dress sensibly", "a particular cut of clothes should never keep one away from church", "a neck tie should not keep one out of a responsible position in the church", "more time should be given to constructive church matters", and "the Bible doesn't say any one should wear any particular form of clothes". On the other hand, 6 of the 15 held that restraint was not over emphasized in the congregation. Reasons given by 3 of these were : "form is giving way fast enough", "form is giving way too rapidly", and "it must be controlled through teaching on plainness". The other responses were, "boys are not under too much restraint; girls might have a wider choice", "the matter is giving us trouble", and "it is causing us more concern than ever".

SUMMARY OF FINDINGS AND CONCLUSIONS

From an ecological standpoint the Brethren congregation, near South English, Iowa, has experienced a gradual expansion during the sixty or more years of its existence. There has been noticeable enlargement of the territory supporting the Brethren constituency. With better means of communication, of travel especially, the membership has tended to push out from the center in all directions. Members no longer hesitate to locate in or beyond South English and Kinross, in an attempt to gain economic or other advantages. Since 1900, eight families have located in South English and two families have located in Kinross, whereas only one family lived in the former village prior to that date. Several Brethren families now reside outside of a ten mile radius from the church building. Balancing this outward movement of expansion to some extent, is the tendency toward centralization evidenced by the location re-

cently of three homes near the present church building. It seems probable, however, that the majority of the Brethren who retire will continue to locate in the village of South English.

Coincident with the outward movement of the Brethren families is the inward trend of people of other denominations. Although this may be of little or no concern to the local congregation at present it is a force which may ultimately affect the unity of the group. It is to be hoped, however, that steps similar to those taken by the Brethren of Orange Township near Waterloo, Iowa, may not yet be resorted to as a means of controlling this situation. In the Orange Township congregation "a committee was appointed to devise a plan or system through which farms to be sold were to be disposed of—in such a way as to enable control of the incoming population as to desirability." This does not imply that such a plan might not be resorted to by the English River group as a means of self-preservation when this congregation has attained the state of social development now held by the Orange Township group.

Economically, families of the local congregation have prospered. Patient, persistent toil, combined with an absence of crop failures and a continued rise in land values, has made the typical Brethren of the locality fairly well-to-do. He has reared his family, made it possible for his children to follow in his occupation—with certain few exceptions—satisfied his cultural wants, and given the needed financial support for the work of his church.

Noticeable progress is being made in the modernization of homes. Families not having modern homes expressed themselves as desiring to have them or as planning to have them as soon as possible. Undoubtedly the majority of all homes of the congregation will be completely modernized within another decade. Furthermore, a majority of farm

women will doubtless be using modern electric and other equipment such as power washers, vacuum cleaners, and pressure cookers.

The local congregation has experienced an increasing interest in education, especially in the Mount Morris College. Progress in secondary education in the neighborhood or community, however, seems not to have kept pace with the desire "to see people better educated".

Better methods of communication, including rural mail delivery, telephone, and automobile, have expanded the contacts of the group with the world at large. The telephone which provides a ready means of visiting while remaining at home may be one of the causes of the lack of sociability within the neighborhood of the congregation frequently referred to by members of the community. The daily paper, made accessible by rural delivery, has put the typical family of the locality in closer touch with the outside world. The automobile has become a means for getting families together for church activities, but it has been an equally effective means of "contacting" these families with society at large. Practically all persons of the local congregation are intermingling more freely in a larger and more varied human environment.

Territorial expansion, economic prosperity, the improvement of farm homes, better methods of communication, and the like, have been accompanied by a growing support of all church work including home and foreign missions, benevolences, and the "forward movement". The Sunday school, established in 1877, has grown from a small group of workers meeting semi-monthly to a gathering of the entire church membership organized into various departments and classes. The Christian Workers' Meeting has been accepted as a means of furthering and deepening religious experience, and the "Sisters' Aid" has become the principal

channel for the provision of funds and other goods for the different home and foreign mission outposts.

The church building has been remodeled and partially modernized, better to meet the needs for all church services. It now comprises seven separate class rooms for Sunday school use, although all are small, in addition to the auditorium which is used for the four additional classes as well as for the regular preaching services. The church yard shows no improvement, however. It is destitute of shade trees and shrubs which in many other congregations add comfort and beauty and furnish desirable places for neighborhood gatherings, such as basket dinners and other social activities.

The net membership of the church has shown no appreciable increase since 1896. The church roll carries approximately 40 names in addition to those carried a quarter century previously. Furthermore, church letters which have been granted during this period are not greatly in excess of letters which have been received. Increases in membership appear to correspond quite closely to increased interest in the new church activities, that is, the Sunday school and the Christian Workers' Meeting.

In the face of many counteracting social influences the local congregation appears to have maintained a high degree of loyalty to the parent organization. It has held strongly to the traditions and customs of the larger group, known locally as "faith and practice". From a religious standpoint, members of the congregation have observed the Golden Rule toward each other and toward individuals of other denominations with whom they have intermingled. The local congregation has done all in its power to maintain peace and harmony, within the local group and with society at large.

Notwithstanding the progress and development noted

above and an unquestioned loyalty of the group to the parent organization, the feeling exists throughout the congregation that there is a lack of the sociability characteristic of former days. "People are not as sociable as they used to be", members say, and the spirit of genuine neighborhood coöperation appears to be growing less evident.

In the community surrounding the local congregation the churches of other denominations are declining. One church in Kinross closed its doors and the three churches in South English are moving all too rapidly in that direction. Notwithstanding this fact, Brethren families are retiring in South English. In addition, the families who do retire there are composed of individuals who find it difficult to attend church services in the country, evening services especially.

The church groups of South English are not gaining and holding the interest of the young people as they should. From pioneer days to the present, boys of South English and vicinity have not had a place to meet in groups, other than in village restaurants or on street corners. Here their pastimes have included loafing, smoking, swearing, and listening to and repeating foul stories.

The prevailing opinions of a number of church leaders are to the effect that the moral tone of the neighborhood or community is rising. But certain immoral acts or practices, including illegitimacy, appear to be increasing especially in the larger community surrounding the local congregation. Although increased immoral tendencies can not be attributed definitely to the lack of vigorous social activities in the community at large or to the prevalence of religious restraint within the Brethren congregation the matter deserves careful observation and attention.

The public schools of the villages of South English and Kinross rank below those of many rural communities. One

of the reasons for this seems to be the unwillingness of school patrons and others to vote for the higher local taxes necessary to provide better and more modern school systems. Probably the real barrier to progress lies in the lack of active coöperation between different families and different larger social groups, regardless of religious sects or denominations.

In view of the above findings, the local congregation may see fit to consider the matter of striving to go beyond the maintenance of loyalty to the parent organization. The realization of this objective, as well as the passive application of the Golden Rule, has failed to meet the challenge for service among the young people of the neighborhood and the larger community. To do unto others as one would be done by, although an ideal guiding principle in daily life, does not always imply giving the greatest possible service to humanity. The teachings of Christ are the same today as during the time when He spoke to and among men, but the relationship of father to son, brother to brother, and friend to friend differs materially. The negative "Thou shalt not" Christianity is giving way to the active principle of service as embodied in Christ's teachings. The true religion of the future promises to deal with social uplift more than with personal salvation. The great task, then, of any religious sect or denomination becomes twofold : "The church must give the individuals what they want and the individuals must be made to want what the church should give them."⁵⁹

On the assumption that the local congregation, without incurring disfavor of the parent church body, may care to embark on a more active forward looking program of service for the immediate neighborhood and community the following suggestions are offered.

⁵⁹ Pratt's *Applied Sociology*, p. 324.

(1) It appears that the development of sociability could be enhanced through a well-arranged series of gatherings within the local congregation. These might start in a conservative way, preferably in the homes as semi-monthly or monthly evening meetings during the winter. Although all members of the congregation could not be accommodated at any one home at the same time some plan of reaching all homes in the course of several years' time could be decided upon. Provision could be made for the playing of well-selected and properly directed games at these meetings.

(2) Study clubs might form an interesting and valuable pastime during these evening meetings, particularly during the winter. Young people, as well as adults, will find pleasure and profit from the careful study of good books, particularly those relating to rural life, under the guidance of capable discussion leaders. Books adapted for such study include : *The Country Church and the Rural Problem* and *Chapters in Rural Progress*, by K. L. Butterfield; *The Country-Life Movement*, *The Holy Earth*, *Universal Service*, and *What is Democracy?* by L. H. Bailey; *Farm Boys and Girls*, by W. A. McKeever; *Rural Life*, by J. M. Galpin; *Rural Sociology*, by P. L. Vogt, and *Constructive Rural Sociology*, by J. M. Gillette. The choice of the book to be studied should be made by the study group with the approval of the discussion leader. Some considerations in the choice of any book are its contribution to actual everyday Christian living and its adaptability for study by the discussion method. The leader of the study group should draw expressions of opinion from others.

(3) Neighborhood or community recreation is desired by many individuals of the congregation. This type of activity is worthy of trial, under the careful direction of a leader, preferably a young man or woman who has had college training. The leader should have good judgment

and a fair knowledge of activities which are suitable for different occasions or gatherings, such as relay races, hand ball, and group games. Baseball, basket ball, and volley ball are ideal games for boys, the two latter are enjoyed by girls as well. An assortment of games adapted for gatherings of different types and sizes may be had from *Games for the Playground, Home, School and Gymnasium*, by Jessie B. Bancroft.

The value of wholesome recreation is now recognized by leading authorities of the Church of the Brethren. D. W. Kurtz of McPherson College holds that "proper games and play can be made a part of education . . . In wholesome play there is more than physical development, for many games require a high degree of alertness and there is the accompanying spirit of happiness that gives healthy tone to the entire system." He adds : "A boy can play a game of ball in such a way that the boys who play with him will be drawn to the Master — Good temper, fairness, courtesy and honesty, as well as freedom from swear words and other evil expressions can not help but impress boys who have not been so careful".⁶⁰

Participation in these group games and activities should be extended to members of families outside of the congregation. It appears that the time has come for an extension of Christian service to the larger community and such extension can be developed most effectively through social contacts between individuals of all denominations. If Christian living is to be vital and enduring it must be broad in its application as well as practical in the results which it seeks.

(4) An open field for religious services exists in the village of South English. With the failure of two of the local churches to provide ministers and with preaching

⁶⁰ Kurtz's *Studies in Doctrine and Devotion*, p. 293.

services on alternate Sundays only in the third church building, the people of South English are ready to do active Christian work under the direction of an efficient leader. Efforts here must be directed wisely in order that friction does not result among individuals of various denominations. Initial activities may well be confined to occasional sermons delivered incidentally for the benefit of the Brethren but primarily for all who may wish to attend. The use of one of the church buildings of the village would doubtless be freely granted.

A similar field of service exists in the village of Kinross. While the work must proceed with caution and must be of slow development for the present, efforts in this direction from the Brethren should be no less worthy of approval by the parent organization and no less significant in the "sight of the Master" than were those of pioneer days. Nor should they be less far-reaching in results accomplished. Although present day methods must differ from those of pioneer times the motive remains the same — the extension of Christian service among one's fellowmen.

(5) The possibility of developing a rural community center is worthy of careful study. A community center, however, means more than a church building and residences grouped about it. It implies a free interchange of interests and activities along agricultural, recreational, social, and religious lines. An active growing community center would mean a larger building suited and fitted for agricultural meetings, community fairs, entertainments, suppers, socials, games, and educational gatherings. Whether a community center building in this particular community should be located near the present church or in the village of South English would be difficult to determine. Geographically, the center of the congregation lies nearer to the church building than to South English. From the standpoint of

trade facilities and schools, however, the center of the larger community is the village of South English. Regardless of the location, no community building should be erected until a thorough study of a number of the best in the United States together with the activities which they house has been made.

The community center idea will doubtless attain its highest development and prove most satisfactory under the guidance of an efficient rural leader, preferably a teacher or a minister. Through closer association with the various individuals, boys especially, the minister will gain a better understanding of the social and religious life of the congregation. In return the congregation will become more widely acquainted with and give freer response to the principles of Christian living as exemplified by the minister.

(6) The matter of providing a more highly educated ministry for the local congregation requires serious consideration. The feeling that there is a lack of general education among the religious and social leadership of the congregation seems to be growing. The time may be near at hand when at least one of the local ministers should have special university training for social leadership, in addition to the course of study offered at Mount Morris or some other Brethren college. This training for leadership calls for some knowledge of the social sciences, particularly sociology, and of the principles of technical agriculture. The minister who is to be the social leader of the community might well be a graduate from a college of agriculture. Some young man or woman from the local congregation could be urged to complete the courses of study at both Mount Morris and the Iowa State College, or some other similar college of good standing. It may soon be possible for the student to secure a fair knowledge of technical agriculture at one or other of the Brethren colleges. Neverthe-

less the candidate for rural leadership will gain a broader vision of the interrelationships of rural life through attendance at a State college or university. He will develop a keener insight into public affairs and a deeper interest in community welfare. He will have, also, a clearer understanding of the social and economic problems which pertain to the every-day activities of farm people. Thus, he should be of inestimable service in connection with matters of production, farm organization or management, coöperative marketing, improvement of farm homes, and betterment of rural life generally throughout the neighborhood and the community.

The program of work forwarded by the minister with college and university training need not replace the present day religious activities of the local congregation. Rather, it may supplement the sermons delivered by the local ministers. It should be social in nature, with the ultimate goal of service to the entire community. It may include organized play, well planned social gatherings, study clubs, and religious education classes. It can be extended readily to the villages of South English and Kinross, as parts of the local congregation's larger community.

Although the better educated minister will serve primarily as a social leader he should be able to assist with the usual church services. He should be able to deliver a sermon occasionally, particularly for the people in the two villages. His duties in the form of social and religious leadership will necessitate his receiving material financial support for himself and his family.

TRENDS IN THE LOCAL CONGREGATION IN 1929 AND 1930

This local congregation has not escaped the influence of social change during the decade following the year 1920, when the preceding study was made. This is more evident

in some respects than in others. It is noticeable particularly with regard to the giving way of "form of dress" and to the adoption of newer types of church activities. For convenience the effects of social change are considered in about the same order as the findings and conclusions presented in the preceding chapter. The presentation is based on observation and information obtained from two personal visits to the congregation in 1929 and 1930 and on additional data obtained through correspondence. More than a dozen leaders of the local group, in addition to several leaders of other groups, were interviewed or communicated with by correspondence. The chief purpose of this final study was to check as far as possible the present trends in the congregation and the larger community against the findings or conclusions of the former study. None of the trends or changes can be attributed to any purposeful consideration of the study so far as it can be ascertained.

There is apparently little if any change in the boundary of the territory of the congregation. A limited expansion of the area is probable but this can not be detected without the use of detailed maps. About the same number and percentage of the total number of families live in the villages of South English and Kinross. One retired family has moved from South English to near the church building; thus there are four "retired" families in this location. Some "recruits" have come in from other congregations. These include the wives of several of the young men who attended the Brethren College at Mount Morris.

The coming of improved highways will doubtless mean a noticeable expansion in the territory of the congregation within the next few decades. Recently the road which passes the church has been taken into the county highway system. It was widened and graded the past summer and will be graveled soon to serve as a connecting road between

two State highways which pass through South English and Wellman. Access to these improved highways will tend to extend the radius of the locality in at least two directions.

Farming continues to be moderately prosperous throughout the locality. Few farms were "lost" during the severe agricultural depression which began about 1920. The several farms that were lost had changed hands during the period of highest inflated land values, immediately preceding 1920, with relatively small initial payments. This does not imply that the locality of the congregation was not hit by the depression, but that farming was well enough capitalized to "weather the storm" more effectively than it did in many other farming localities.

Farmers of the locality seem to be more progressive than in 1920. Farm operations seem to be adjusted more than formerly to meet changing situations in regard to soil needs, organization methods, and marketing facilities and opportunities. There is evidence of a greater interest in agricultural college and experiment station work, State and county fair exhibits, and agricultural extension activities. The greater interest in localized extension activities is attested by increased membership in the Farm Bureau, the recognized agency through which these activities function in the State of Iowa.

Modernization of the homes continues at a more rapid pace than formerly. More than three-fourths of the houses are now equipped with central lighting systems serviced by an electric high line and many of these are fitted with modern "conveniences" such as electric washers, irons, stoves, grills, and refrigerators. Three-fifths of the homes now have radios and practically all have pianos or other musical instruments.

Interest in formal education has increased materially during the decade. This is evidenced by an increasing number

of students at Mount Morris College and in the high schools at South English and Kinross. The majority of the students who have finished at Mount Morris have returned to the locality to take up farming. The others are teaching in various localities of Iowa and other States.

Through increased interest and support the school systems at South English and Kinross show improvement. Both have State-approved four-year high school courses with extra-curricular athletic and forensic activities. Both "put on basket ball games, plays, public speaking contests, farm bureau lectures and other community activities. Children from Brethren families take prominent part in all these activities, especially in basket ball, public speaking and plays. The Brethren patrons attend these activities and seem to get real enjoyment out of them."

During the past year the Kinross school district which now includes what was formerly the Liberty and Prairie districts erected a new high school building. The building is modern in all respects, with "one of the best rural school gymnasiums in southeastern Iowa."

More numerous contacts of members of the congregation with the world at large, in the form of attendance at high school and college by the youth, extended travel by the adults, and radio programs have resulted in a broadened and more active local leadership. This is evidenced in the forwarding of newer and more vitalized programs of church work, including affiliated activities and in the participation of members in the leadership and support of general organizations of the locality and the larger community. Several of the Brethren women are home bureau leaders for their school districts, including one who serves as township home bureau chairman. These and other members of the congregation are sharing the responsibilities of leadership in other matters of interest to the locality and the larger

community to a much greater extent than formerly. Many of the boys and girls of the congregation are participants in the 4-H Club work. Ministers and Sunday school teachers are giving more consideration to the affairs of the State and the nation than ever before.

Membership of the congregation has practically held its own during the decade. A loss of ten members, mostly by letter between 1919 and 1920, was almost recovered by baptism and letter by 1928.

MEMBERSHIP STATISTICS, 1920-1929							
YEAR	BAPTISMS	RECEIVED BY LETTER	RECLAIMED	LOST BY LETTER	DEATH	DIS- OWNED	MEMBERSHIP
1920	1	5	0	12	4	0	173
1921	0	5	0	14	2	2	160
1922	0	2	0	3	2	0	157
1923	12	0	0	1	0	0	168
1924	0	3	0	2	0	0	169
1925	2	0	0	7	1	2	161
1926	0	0	0	5	1	2	153
1927	11	0	0	0	1	0	163
1928	8	8	0	0	0	0	179
1929	6	1	0	4	4	0	178

The old church building is still serving the needs of the congregation. It is regarded as inadequate by many, particularly by the young people. Interest in a new building has resulted in the raising of a "little money in an unofficial and semi-private way by different groups (classes, etc.)" and these funds "are being held for the purpose of being applied toward a new church building whenever the time may come for such." At its last business meeting the church decided to start a building fund and designated a

committee to see to the loaning of such fund to the best advantage. It is probable that the present building will be replaced by a \$30,000 to \$50,000 structure before the end of the present decade.

During the past ten years the local congregation is credited with the adoption of an enlarged program of church work. An offering is taken regularly by means of the envelope system. The annual church budget for all purposes now amounts to \$3400, more than one-third of which goes to the General Mission Board of the parent organization for home and foreign missions.⁶¹ Additional offerings, taken on special occasions, are devoted to specific purposes. Provisions which are contributed by the Sisters' Aid to different orphanages and old peoples' homes are not included in the budget.

The presiding elder is now given \$100 annually; otherwise the ministers serve without pay as formerly. During the summer of 1927 the congregation employed a visiting minister to assist with pastoral activities and "to work with the young people".

The newer church activities include the development of a daily vacation Bible school as a means of imparting religious education to the children of the congregation and "surrounding community". Two summers ago, when the Brethren had thoroughly established the school they asked neighboring church groups to coöperate and transferred it to the village schools of South English. There "the Brethren furnished some of the teachers and about 25 per cent of the attendance" of approximately two hundred. They were "responsible for the transportation and had fine co-operation in getting people to donate their cars."

⁶¹ The Forward Movement funds pledged amounting to about \$3000 in 1920, \$1800 in 1921, and \$1200 annually thereafter are designated General Mission Funds.

The newer activities include also the holding of separate Sunday evening programs for young people—persons “from twelve years of age to marriage.” These young people now hold their programs in the basement of the church while the adults conduct their Christian Workers’ Meeting in the auditorium, except when “most of the young folks are away at college.” During the past winter those at home have met with the adult group and all have “had a good time” conducting a discussion program on “The Christian Attitude Toward War”, an outline issued by the Federal Council of Churches.

The young people’s group of the local church is especially active. It is a vital part of the Brethren Young People’s Department of the parent organization, and sends representatives or delegates to district, State, and other young people’s conferences, and entertains conference groups in return. “When their conference was held here (at the local church) the young married people gave them a banquet in the church basement. The conference had camp life, religious and recreational programs and advisors who were of the best.”

New developments in local Sunday school work include participation in “mission projects and the World’s Friendship Movement”, which reach the primary, junior, and intermediate departments, particularly. There is increased interest and coöperation in county, State, and other Sunday school combinations. In the summer of 1928 the local congregation sent a delegate to the World’s Sunday School Convention at Los Angeles.

The Sisters’ Aid program of work has been expanded and vitalized. Its activities include “all day” meetings at the church and other group meetings for sewing, quilting, and preparing supplies for “bake sales”, bazaars, and the like. During the past few years the Aid has served suppers

at the Baptist church building and "ice cream socials in the park" in South English, as well as luncheons at different farm auction sales within the locality and the larger community of the congregation.

The church is now opened to programs of a spiritual nature including "White Gift", "Missionary Play", and "Easter programs". These ordinarily replace the regular preaching services. Last year the Easter program was in the form of a cantata, under the direction of a well-trained local choir leader. It involved the use of a piano which had been placed in the church during the preceding summer.

The use of the piano "adds much to the spirit of the regular church and Sunday school services", and enables the congregation to have good music, and local leaders in the different kinds of church work now "think good music is spiritual".

Distinctive dress is no longer observed by the younger members of the congregation and less attention is paid from the pulpit to the form of dress. The local congregation is marked with less restraint in regard to dress and to certain other aspects of social life than at any time in its history. On the other hand it appears to be giving more attention to the preparation for active Christian service in the neighborhood, the larger community, and the world at large.

The situation in the local churches in South English and Kinross shows no improvement. Although the Methodists at South English now hold preaching services weekly, the Baptists have recently discontinued preaching services,⁶² and the Baptist Sunday school is reported as being "almost petered out". The Christian group still maintains a fairly good Sunday school but has no preaching service. The Methodist church building at Kinross is now used as a

⁶² The additional Methodist service at South English was made possible by the dropping of Kinross from the local circuit.

dwelling house and the Christian church there is without a pastor. No Brethren services have been held in either South English or Kinross during the past ten years and it is doubtful if a move in this direction at present or in the near future would be desirable or advisable.

Recapitulation. — The English River congregation of the Church of the Brethren has experienced marked progress, particularly in the furthering of Christian service, during the past decade. This is evident in the adoption of programs of work which have "held the young people better than any other church in the community" and in the development of a leadership with vision and a desire to serve. The congregation has become much less conservative and much less reluctant to try new activities during the decade. Apparently its chief objective has become the extension of the principles of Christian living in the light of new conditions confronting the local neighborhood and the larger community. With this objective as a goal in the future one may safely predict another three-quarters of a century of service by the local congregation to the immediate neighborhood, the surrounding community, and the world at large.

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